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Glen A. Pierce

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evangelical **VISITOR**

May 1991



If you do away
with the yoke
of oppression . . .
and if you spend
yourselves in
behalf of the
hungry . . .
you will be like
a well-watered
garden,
like a spring whose
waters never fail.

—Isaiah 58:9-11

Learning to let

Ascension Day. Lots of people aren't even aware there is such a Christian holy day, much less that it occurs on the Thursday that comes forty days after Easter.

Unlike many people, I have childhood memories of Ascension Day. Not because I paid that much attention to the church calendar, but because my father's employer, a man of devout Christian observance, always gave his employees a vacation on Ascension Day. I haven't heard of anyone since then getting that day off.

I want to make a modest proposal: that Christians renew their observance of this holy day. If nothing else, Ascension Day speaks to us of the human experience of learning to let go. That is what the disciples of Jesus faced as they stood there gazing into heaven while "a cloud took him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9 RSV).

The person who wrote the New Testament books of Luke and Acts give two versions of Jesus leaving his disciples after the resurrection. The first account says only that "Jesus left them" (Luke 24:51). The second account makes the parting much more dramatic, with the Lord disappearing in a cloud. *How* it happened, we cannot know. But one moment he was there talking with

them. They could hear him, touch him, exchange glances with him. And then, suddenly, he was gone. How must they have felt? How could they go on without him to teach them, comfort them, crack the whip over them, inspire them? Surely the disciples asked themselves such questions.

Jesus had been aware of his disciples' dependency on him. He knew they believed that without him, they could not function. He knew they needed to be prepared for his inevitable leave-taking. He told them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit to fall upon them (Acts 1:4-8). Though Jesus would not be with the disciples in the flesh, he promised that his Spirit would go with them. And we, his latter day disciples by the grace of God, believe that his Spirit still is alive and at work among us.

Nevertheless, when the moment of Jesus' departure was actually upon them, I am sure those first disciples were greatly distressed. Saying goodbye to someone or something you have come to love is never easy. There are people who will go to great lengths to avoid goodbyes.

Not long ago I read a book written by a man who played minor league baseball. On the first team he played for, he struck up a friendship with a new teammate. Towards the end of the season, the other player was released by the management. Here is what the writer says about his friend's departure.

I learned of his release when I arrived at the Armory one afternoon. He'd left . . . without saying goodbye. I was glad. I don't like goodbyes, never have. I distrust the emotions that rise from them, which are magnified and distorted by them.¹

Now, it may indeed be true that goodbyes do "magnify and distort" human emotions. Yet I think in the long run it is better to run that risk than to suppress the natural sorrow that farewells call forth.

A few summers ago, my wife and I with our then six-year-old daughter spent a day of our vacation at Boston Harbor. There are many activities for both grown-ups and kids, including the chance to purchase souvenirs and snacks. As I stood in line to buy popcorn, I heard a tearful wail fill the air. I turned around to see a little girl of four or five years of

When the moment of Jesus' departure was actually upon them, I am sure those first disciples were greatly distressed.

Kenneth Gible, a freelance writer, is also a Church of the Brethren pastor living in Arlington, Va.

go

by Kenneth L. Gible

age pointing upwards. There went her yellow balloon soaring towards the blue sky. In only a few moments, the ocean breeze had carried it out of sight. How did the mother respond to her child's tears? Not with sympathy, but with: "I told you that would happen if you weren't careful!" And I winced when I realized that's what I might have said if my daughter had let her balloon get away.

It's just a balloon; that's what we grown-ups think, and thereby reveal how much we have forgotten what it's like to be a child, how much we have built our defenses against the pain of letting go. For one of the things we must learn about letting go is the inevitability of sorrow that goes along with it. And this is so whether we are the one doing the leaving or the one being left. So it was only natural for the disciples to grieve at their Lord's leaving, and it is natural for us to grieve when it is time to let go.

Madeleine L'Engle, writing about the Ascension, also is reminded of a lost balloon. She remembers her daughter holding onto a blue balloon on a trip to the zoo.

Suddenly there came a cry, a howl of absolute loss. We looked on high and there we saw the balloon, ascending, turning and turning, higher and higher, blending into the smoky blue of the city sky.

Then the author describes the disciples looking up and watching Jesus

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disappear from their sight and saying,

*"We do not understand."
Lord, nor do I, and share thus
in their sorrow
at the same time the Spirit sets
my sorrow free
to turn to love, and teaches me
through pain to know
that love will dwell in me and I
in love only if I let love go.²*

* * * * *

"Only if I let love go." Surely that is one of life's hardest lessons. Though it may be painful, try to think back to a time in your life when you learned to let love go. It may be as a child when you lost a beloved pet or even a stuffed animal. It may be a romance in your teenage years or in your later life. The one who had been in your thoughts constantly, who had brought such excitement and joy to you, now was no longer going to be there. At first you may have denied the need to let go. You supposed by desperately hanging on or offering to make certain changes, you could keep love alive. But that didn't work, and finally you knew you would have to let love go. Only then could you begin to go forward again, to move on to the next stage of your life. It takes courage to let love go. And it helps to have faith in One who will never let you go.

George Matheson was a young man engaged to be married when he discovered he was slowly but surely going blind. After she learned of his condition, his fiancée came to the painful decision that she could not face being married to a man soon to be blind. Out of the suffering he faced in learning to let love go, George Matheson wrote these words:

*O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its
flow*

May richer, fuller be.

Those words, born of loss and of faith, have helped countless people since then in their learning to let to.

A special kind of letting go is required of parents. In the early

All of life, as we know it, consists of beginnings and endings, of comings and goings, of learning to know a person or a place and then having to separate from them.

months and years of a child's life, parents may hold their children and rock them to sleep, toss them into the air and catch them, kiss the bruised finger and make it all better. Then children grow up and no longer require or even welcome cuddling. Parents are torn by conflicting feelings. On one hand they are relieved at escaping the overwhelming responsibility of parenting; on the other hand, they feel both sadness and apprehension as they see their children asserting their independence.

Letting go as a parent requires courage and faith. Some mothers and fathers have difficulty in letting go, and *all* mothers and fathers have difficulty in knowing *how* and *when* to let go. Some offspring must be restrained from jumping out of the nest, others need a gentle, yet firm push. But there is no foolproof formula for parents to follow. In the end, parents send their children into life trusting only in the effect the years at home may have had.

And then, of course, there is the final letting go that comes with death. It may be that God in divine wisdom gives us other leave-takings to prepare us for the ultimate one. All of life, as we know it, consists of beginnings and endings, of comings and goings, of learning to know a person or a place and then having to separate from them. Our minds cannot conceive of anything different. Only the divine imagination can speak of eternity, of reunion with

loved ones, of tears wiped from our eyes, of heaven.

Meanwhile, in this life, we face the necessity of learning to let go of our loved ones. But we need not let go of the love we have experienced with them. That is ours to keep, in our memories and in our hearts. In a larger sense, all the love God gives us is a permanent, nonrevocable gift. What we are called upon to let go of may be the presence of a person, or one stage of a relationship in exchange for another, or a child's dependency on us, or any number of love experiences. But the love itself goes on. It is ours to keep into eternity.

The love that Jesus had shared with his disciples could not be taken away. It was theirs to keep. But what he had taught them was that love that is clutched tightly to oneself is not serving the purpose God created it for. Love is not to be hoarded as a miser hoards gold; instead it is to be given away. And this is the last and greatest lesson to be learned about letting go. It is the lesson of letting go of ourselves, of our egos, of our tendency to suppose the world revolves around us.

"Let go and let God" goes the popular religious saying. Some people think that means we should sit back and let God do everything for us. I think it means something else. I think it means we must learn that letting go is part of life, that if we try to keep people or experiences or love itself for ourselves, we will never know the fullness of life that God wills for us. I think it means that as we experience both the pain and the new beginnings of letting go, that we will meet God there, the One who has promised that nothing in all creation can make God let go of us. ■

¹Pat Jordan, *A False Spring*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1973, p. 120.

²Madeleine L'Engle, *The Irrational Season*, New York: Seabury Press, 1977, pp. 113-114.

A little window on Ethel's life...

by Paul Boyer



The Boyers and Dayton Mission workers in 1926. L. to r.: Clarence and Ethel Boyer, William H. Boyer (with infant grandson and namesake William E. Boyer), Susie Boyer, Angeline Cox, Eva Dick, and Rozella (Boyer) Herr.

This brief account of Ethel Boyer's life was written for a family memorial service held in Princeton, New Jersey, on December 10, 1990. The aim was to convey to the younger members of the family, particularly the great-grandchildren, something of the life of a person whom they had known primarily as very aged and bedridden. Thus, the style is deliberately very simple. I hope others may find it of interest. —Paul Boyer

A person's life is like a story. Today is the end of the earthly part of one very long story. Sometimes when we only hear the last part of a story, it's very confusing, because we don't know the beginning or the middle parts. So these are some of the earlier parts of this very long story.

Ethel French was born on Easter Sunday morning, April 2, 1899, in Lakeview, Ohio, a little town near Indian Lake. A man from Ohio named William McKinley was President of the United States; the Civil War had ended only 34 years before. Ethel's ancestors came from England and Germany, some of them before the American Revolution of 1776. We have good family evidence that one of her ancestors, a grandmother seven generations back, was an American Indian.

Her father, Martin Luther French, was a carpenter. Martin and his wife Laura had ten children, two of whom died when they were small. One who died was a little boy, Ernest LeRoy. Ethel was the fifth of these ten children.

In 1905, when Ethel was six years old, the family moved to Springfield, Ohio. They were very poor. Once they lived in a house with a roof so leaky that the snow came in on the girls' beds! Ethel loved to help her mother, especially in caring for her little sister Opal and her little brother Orville. She attended a school called Emerson School, but when she was twelve years old she left school to go

A little window on Ethel's life . . .

to work. First she lived with a family named Ulery, to help care for their two little boys, Carl and Dale. When she was fourteen she went to live with another family, Orville and Mamie Herr, on a farm outside Springfield. Here for three years she cared for the young Herr children, and helped with housework and cooking. Mamie Herr taught her a lot about cooking, sewing, and other useful skills.

In 1916, when Ethel was seventeen years old, she moved to Dayton, Ohio, to work in a city mission run by the Brethren in Christ Church. She continued in this post for eight years. She helped with the housework and also with the work of the mission, teaching Sunday school classes, singing at funerals and special services, and visiting the sick.

We have a little glimpse of her life in these years in a letter she wrote to a friend in June 1919, when she was 20 years old. She tells about going with her Sunday school children on a trip to the country, and she tells about a trip she is going to make that week to visit Mamie Herr to help prepare the cherries from the Herr family's cherry trees. She says: "I am sure we will have a nice time, because I like the country so well." She tells about going swimming or at least wading in the Miami River, near the mission: "Tell Rozella I don't know whether I can wait till she comes or not, if I get a chance, because I am so anxious to go in. You asked if Clarence and Uncle Will enjoyed their swim in the water. I asked Clarence this morning and he said, Yes, they surely did enjoy it, only Uncle Will took a little cold." Then she goes on: "Last Monday evening, we had such a big rain. Herman Avenue was just covered with water. After it stopped raining, the children went out into the street to wade in the water. Clarence went down the street and counted the children and there were

sixty. . . . That surely was a sight to see." These are not big, important events, but they are part of this story. They give us a little window on Ethel's life seventy years ago, when she was just a young woman.

In that letter, Ethel mentioned people called "Will" and "Rozella" and "Clarence." The mission directors were William and Susie Boyer. They had a daughter Rozella and a son Clarence. Rozella and Ethel were good friends, and Clarence and Ethel became good friends, too, especially when they discovered that they were both born on the same day! Eventually they decided to get married, and they set the date for their twenty-fifth birthday—April 2, 1924. Once again, it was an Easter Sunday. They were married in the home of Orville and Mamie Herr. Ethel's older sister Anna was there, and she says: "Ethel and Clarence came down the stairs together. Ethel was carrying a bouquet of flowers. She looked so beautiful."

Now that she was married, Ethel had a new life. Her husband Clarence started a business in Dayton selling religious gifts, books, and greeting cards, and from the first, Ethel was a very important part of the business. She helped with the financial records, typed the letters, filled the orders that people sent in by mail, and helped take care of local customers. As the business grew, Ethel's work increased. She worked long, long hours, especially around Christmas time, when business was very heavy. One year, Clarence gave her a new desk chair for Christmas! She continued in this work until 1970, when she and Clarence retired. Ethel never thought of herself as a career woman, but she really was.

All this while, Ethel was raising a family of three boys, William, born in 1925; Ernest born in 1928; and Paul, born in 1935. (She named her

middle son Ernest LeRoy, for her little brother who had died.) She was a wonderful mother. She had cared for babies and little children ever since she was young herself, and she knew what to do. From 1931 to 1933, Ethel's sister Anna and Anna's husband Max lived with Ethel and Clarence. This was during a terrible Depression, when it was hard to find work. Again they were poor, but they managed. Ethel and Anna would cook and bake, while Max raised a garden. Anna remembers William's first day of school in 1931, when Ethel dressed him in a new suit. "He looked so cute," says Anna.

It was not easy to work full-time in a business, and also raise a family, care for a house, and cook three meals a day. But Ethel did it. She put on special meals for holidays like Thanksgiving or Christmas, and they were delicious. Visiting preachers would come through Dayton to hold services at the mission, and they would be invited for special meals as well. In the early 1940s, during World War II, young women from the Dayton area and from Indiana who came to Dayton to work rented rooms from Clarence and Ethel, and Ethel would prepare dinner for them, too. The house was crowded, but there were some happy times.

Ethel was also very active in the work of the Dayton Mission. She taught a Sunday school class of boys for many years. She was respected for her quiet good judgment, and people would come to her with their troubles. Ethel was always very thoughtful, and she was an excellent judge of character. She did not like it when people acted artificial or stuck up; she liked simple, plain ways. Though she had only six or seven years of schooling, she was very intelligent.

As Ethel grew older, she accepted the process of aging. Once when she was in her late fifties she said: "Peo-

E.V. Timelines

ple talk about how teenagers have to adjust to becoming adults, but every stage of life requires adjustments.”

In her retirement years she had to adjust to a lot of changes. She and Clarence sold the business, moved to a different house in Dayton, then to Albany, New York; to Baltimore; and then to Messiah Village in Pennsylvania. But she accepted all these changes. She loved to write letters to family and friends, and when she was older she had more time for letter writing. And she had more time for the sewing and quilting that were an important part of her life. She loved her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and treasured their photographs and the gifts they gave her.

The last few pages of this long story were rather sad. Ethel's husband Clarence died in April 1988, just one week after they had observed their 64th wedding anniversary! As Ethel grew very old she became weak and her mind did not work well.

But today we can remember the whole long story. Ethel's life was a full and useful one, and it is nice for us to be able to remember her not just as a very old person, but as a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, a hard working business woman, a person of quiet Christian faith, a beautiful bride, and a little girl who loved to care for her even littler brothers and sisters.

Ethel and Clarence Boyer had three sons. William is Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences of Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, Calif. Ernest is President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, based in Princeton, N.J. Paul, author of this article, is Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Among other books, Paul has written Mission on Taylor Street, about the founding and early years of the Dayton Brethren in Christ Mission.

100 Years Ago

“To Correspondents—Write only on one side of the paper with black ink, and not too near the edge. No communication will be inserted without the author's name and not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.”—*H. Davidson, editor, quoted from May 1, 1891 issue*

“Having received a call from the Canada Mission Board to do some mission work . . . [I] boarded the train at Fordwich. . . . While laboring at Pine Orchard the brethren H.R. Heise and Peter Steckley, of Bethesda, accompanied me in turns. We held twelve meetings and visited fifty-seven families. . . . While visiting from place to place we met with some who said they enjoyed religion, yet by closer questioning learned they knew nothing of a change of heart. I was impressed forcibly of the need of such work. . . .”
—*John Reichard, quoted from May 1, 1891 issue*

75 Years Ago

“. . . An all-day Sunday school meeting was held at Fairland M. H. Dauphin and Lebanon Dist., Pa., on April 21. . . . One of the afternoon topics, Sunday school Literature . . . was then taken up. The points emphasized by the speaker [*Visitor* editor George Detwiler] were that there is a great abundance of literature. . . . How to Make the Bible Interesting to the Pupil was discussed by Eld. Asa Climenhaga. . . . How to Keep the Pupils in the Sunday School During the Teen Age was discussed by Bish. C. N. Hostetter. . . .”—*quoted from the May 1, 1916 issue*

50 Years Ago

“The Seventy-first annual Conference of the Brethren in Christ will convene (D.V.) June 4, at Camp Alexander Mack, two miles southeast of Milford, Indiana. . . . The cost . . . will be 20¢ per meal. . . . For the past number of years, the problem of entertaining Conference has been an ever increasing one. . . . Where Conferences have been held in local churches or places where there was inadequate facilities. . . . We have faith and confidence in our people that they will easily and without strain adjust themselves to the somewhat different method of Conference entertainment. . . .”—*V. L. Stump, editor, quoted from the May 5, 1941 issue*

Sunday, June 8, 9:45 a.m.—Arthur Climenhaga spoke to the Conference body on “The Necessity of a Minister Acquiring an Extensive Vocabulary and an Impressive Delivery.”—*from the General Conference program listings, quoted from the May 19, 1941 issue*

25 Years Ago

“Warren Hoffman is elected executive vice-president [of Messiah College student body]. Warren is the son of John and Betty Hoffman of Maytown and is majoring in pre-medicine.”—*quoted from the May 9, 1966 issue under “Our Colleges”*

10 Years Ago

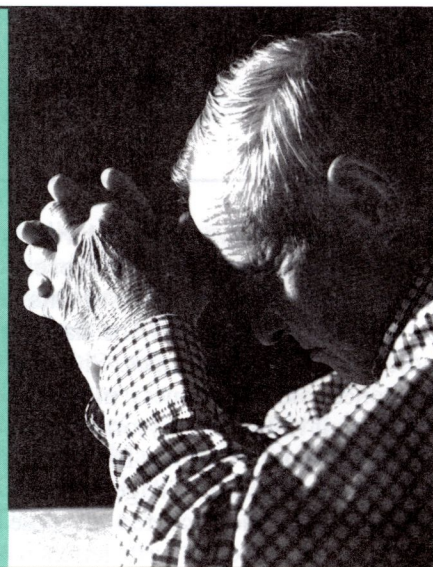
Dwight and Lois Paine were announced as winners of the 1980 hymn contest. The winning entry: “Our True Battle.”—*quoted from the May 25, 1981 issue*

more on page 21

Disturbing thoughts

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THEM?

by Dr. David R. Leaman



A woman wrings her hands, paces the floor and prays some empty phrases as she anxiously awaits the return of her husband. He is only 15 minutes late, but she is already overwhelmed with negative thoughts. "Something terrible is going to happen to him; I just know it," she cries in a staccato voice. "I can't stand to be alone. What if he was in an accident? O, God please protect him. Why isn't he here yet? It seems like forever. I'm afraid something horrible is going to happen. If he doesn't come back soon, I'll die." As she utters the word "die," she feels another surge of panic, afraid she will be abandoned with no one to take care of her. She can't stop the escalating catastrophic thoughts.

A man sits alone with his hands pressed tightly against his forehead. Self-condemning thoughts are charging through his mind. He feels defeated and worthless. He cannot shut off the stream of negative thoughts. Trying to resist them, he feels too weary to protect himself from their stinging barbs. "I'm worthless," he says in a whisper. "God can't love such a useless piece of trash. I'll never amount to anything. I'm a failure and can't do anything right. I'm so ashamed—I can't please anybody." As the negative thoughts gain momentum, he feels increasingly helpless and stripped of self-esteem.

Perhaps every person can identify to some degree with these negative thoughts. All of us know the internal struggle of intrusive thoughts that seem powerful enough to overwhelm us. Each person

has his or her own method for coping with such thoughts.

There are psychological techniques that can effectively help persons overcome negative thinking. During the last 30 years cognitive therapeutic methods have been well developed. Both Christians and non-Christians have benefitted.

Many popular self-help books describe a variety of cognitive techniques to eliminate negative thinking. One of the most comprehensive and applauded was written by David Burns: *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*, 1980. More recently, William Backus and Marie Chapian have delineated this approach using a scriptural perspective in a helpful book entitled *Telling Yourself The Truth*, 1985.

Additionally, medical research has demonstrated that selected medications have been helpful in curbing obsessive thoughts. However, even with skillful cognitive therapies and medication, a considerable number of people remain in bondage to destructive negative thoughts.

I believe that beyond the psychological and medical interventions, the Christian has a greater resource in the Holy Spirit and the revealed Word of God. The Scriptures provide guidance for overcoming intrusive negative thoughts.

Before exploring these verses, however, it would be beneficial to consider the source of negative or evil thoughts. Whether such thoughts are triggered by some environmental stimulus, or spring from our unconscious minds, the ultimate source of negative or evil thoughts is Satan. According to Scriptures, Satan is described by Jesus as "a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the

truth, for there is no truth in him. . . . He is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). Satan's goal is to defeat or destroy persons through deception (1 Peter 5:8). He is superior to human beings in his power and knowledge. We don't understand the complex processes in which Satan influences our negative thoughts. An example in Scripture in which Satan influenced a member of the early church is recorded in Acts 5:3-6. In that situation, Ananias lied and hid money that was designed for helping others. The apostle Peter confronted him: "How is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit?" Scripture also reveals that Satan is an accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). Therefore, certain negative thoughts and self-condemning statements could be the maligning work of Satan influencing our cognitive processes. It is Satan's goal to direct our thoughts away from Truth, to become obsessed with something false. Satan knows our weaknesses, and our childhood experiences. Therefore, persistent negative thoughts may require a spiritual healing process beyond the psychological techniques.

A magical formula for dispelling unwanted thoughts does not exist, because we are dealing with complex psychological and spiritual factors. However, James 4:7-8 indicates progressive steps in overcoming negative thoughts: Submit to God; then resist the Devil; finally draw near to God.

Before you can resist the Devil and dispel the negative thoughts, you must first submit to God. This involves emphasizing God's relationship to you. Affirm who Jesus is. Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe and has conquered

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Satan through his crucifixion and resurrection. Affirm that Jesus is Lord over all. Simply repeat this truth, "Jesus is Lord and nothing can separate me from the love of God" (see Romans 8:38-39). This helps to focus your thoughts positively.

Acknowledge that Christ dwells within and you are God's child. Continue the process of submitting to God by focusing on your relationship *in* Christ. Remind yourself that you are a son or daughter of the living God (Galatians 4:4-7). Since you have accepted Christ by confession of faith, you can affirm that Christ is in you. "If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us" (1 John 4:15-16). Thus reaffirm your identity in Christ.

Then, ask Jesus for help in that specific struggle (1 John 5:14-15). Recognize your dependency on Christ, ask for Christ to deliver you from evil, providing the strength to resist Satan and the negative thoughts.

How does one resist Satan? Humbly admit that trying to resist Satan through your own efforts is utterly futile. There are no sufficient psychological tools for overcoming Satan's impact upon our thinking processes. The Scriptures teach that resisting Satan can only be done "in the name of Jesus." In speaking to his disciples, Christ told them to ask the Father in Jesus' name in order to receive their requests (John 16:23-24). In giving the Great Commission to his disciples, Jesus stated that they would drive out demons, heal the sick and experience other miraculous events "in Jesus' name" (Mark 16:16-17). When Peter and John healed the crippled beggar, Peter stated, "It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him" (Acts 3:16). The apostle Paul proclaims in the famous passage of Philippians 2 that "God exalted [Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth" (vs. 9-10). Satan cannot face Jesus. Jesus has defeated him in the temptation experience, on the cross, and finally in the resurrection. That same power which raised Jesus from the dead is within us (Ephesians 1:19-20).

The negative thoughts are deceitful lies. In Jesus' name, the evil thoughts can be rebuked. You can command Satan to flee by saying, "In the name of Jesus, leave me alone." This is a process,

not a simple quick solution. The phrase may need to be repeated when resisting Satan in Jesus' name. You may visualize Christ defeating Satan when commanding the Devil to leave. Picture Jesus as the victorious Lord. The relief may be gradual, but God "is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one" (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

Upon resisting the Devil in the name of Jesus, Satan and the persistent negative thoughts will leave. A peaceful reprieve will follow, a sense of calm after the conflict has ceased.

In the stillness of the relief, and the quietness that follows, draw near to God. Thank God for his great love and faithfulness. Be careful not to foolishly think that you have mastered evil through some formula. Express sincere gratitude to the Lord. You may want to visualize Jesus at this time, experiencing his healing presence.

God draws near to us during these precious and powerful moments. In such experiences, we *feel* the presence of God, sensing his peace. Prior to this, we felt only the struggle and our inadequacy. However, drawing near to him, we feel the anxieties dissolving. Thank God for his presence. Such experiences provide even more inner strength and greater hope for victory when the next battle of negative thoughts confronts us.

Following these scriptural guidelines will produce emotional freedom. But let us not think for a moment that we will ever be immune to the attacks of Satan. Negative thoughts will most certainly come again. Perhaps the same day, or several times during that day you will be harassed with disturbing thoughts. But applying these principles is the scriptural way to overcoming the thoughts. Victory is certain, but is sometimes a slow process in the midst of the struggle. There is great relief and freedom that comes through submitting to God and then resisting the devil.

In summary, these progressive steps are outlined in James 4:7-8:

1. Submit to God by:
 - a. Affirming who Jesus is: "Jesus is Lord and nothing can separate me from the love of God."
 - b. Affirming that Christ is in you: "Christ is in me and I am accepted as a child of God."
 - c. Asking Christ to help you resist the Devil.
2. Resist the Devil by:
 - a. Commanding in Jesus' name that Satan and the evil thoughts leave.

- b. Visualizing Jesus casting out the evil thoughts.

3. Draw near to God by:

- a. Thanking God for his faithfulness.
 - b. Resting and meditating on Jesus.
 - c. Enjoying the peace.

The above principles of James 4:7-8 are applied by the individual alone. There is another principle for personal healing that the apostle James identifies. He writes in Chapter 5:16:

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

The confession of our faults to others is an essential step in emotional and spiritual healing. In the confidentiality of other caring persons, we open ourselves honestly and share our defects and negative thoughts. The very experience of honest self-disclosure is cleansing, bringing beautiful release from personal bondage. We don't have to hide or fear rejection when we discover the healing power through confessing to others. Following the risk of being vulnerable, we pray for each other. The prayers are specific to the negative thoughts we have disclosed. Since every person has certain persistent negative thoughts, our deep sense of shame is reduced through honest sharing followed by prayer.

God has provided within the body of believers a way for persons to offer grace to one another. The grace of God is administered through compassionate listening to the honest confession of another person. When the vulnerability of confession is combined with the humility of prayer, God heals. We receive his healing grace and the bondage of negative thoughts is broken. Several examples of this can be observed in prayer groups, small group sharing for personal growth, and in the twelve-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous. In these settings, the self-disclosure helps us to identify and "let go" of the roots of our personal defects.

In James 4:7-8, the "confession" is a process of surrendering to God our negative thoughts and commanding Satan to leave through Jesus' name. In James 5:16, the "confession" is a process of risking with others our negative thoughts and receiving healing grace through loving prayer.

Together, these principles form the spiritual methods for overcoming evil and setting us free from personal bondage. Thanks be to God for his liberating truths. ■



The biblical view

by Fannie Slick

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King's horses and all the
King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty
together again.

Poor Humpty Dumpty—but he's not alone. Many Christians struggle daily with such feelings of hopelessness. Some circumstances are beyond our ability to change. God knows that if we could change them, we would. In the creation of man, God saw that it was not good that he should be alone, so he created someone to come alongside and help. Life was not designed for isolation, but for companionship. "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" (Ecc. 4:9-10). The mandate to "encourage one another"—build each other up—is found throughout the New Testament. It is a basic biblical principle that the encouragement you receive is intended to equip you to minister similar encouragement to others.

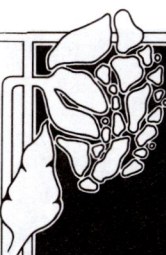
Second Cor. 1:3-4 says: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."

These companion articles were prepared by two members of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church for a women's fellowship meeting. Fannie Slick is Director of Nurses at Menno-Haven, a local nursing home. Barb Peckman is a homemaker, cake decorator, and farmer's wife who helps daily in the family business, Peckman Dairy.

The Old and New Testaments provide some beautiful illustrations of the enormous energy unleashed in the presence of encouragement. See the stories surrounding these key verses:

1. It sustains in time of weakness—Exodus 17:12: "When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—so that his hands remained steady until sunset."
2. It gives success in battle—Judges 20:11: "So all the men of Israel got together and united as one man against the city."
3. It gives us nerve in our conflict—1 Sam. 14:7: "Do all that you have in mind," his armor bearer said. "Go ahead; I am with you heart and soul."
4. It will encourage reforms. Ezra 10:4: "Rise up, this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it."
5. It provides strength to carry through great undertakings. See Nehemiah 4-6.
6. It gives added power in prayer—Matt. 18:19: "I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."
7. It brings men to Christ—Mark 2:3: "Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them."

"One Anothering" is not an option, it is a command. Hebrews 10:24 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." It makes us a participator in the work of God, not an observer. When have we last lifted up the hands of our spiritual leaders, a discouraged friend, a tired friend? Do we help shoulder some of their responsibilities? "Go ahead, I'm with you," may be the encouragement needed to someone surrounded by overwhelming odds. Cooperation is needed if the job is to get done. As in Ezra and Nehemiah's day, become part of the vision whereby great things are accomplished. ■



"One anothering"

Above all, love each other deeply
Offer hospitality to each other without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

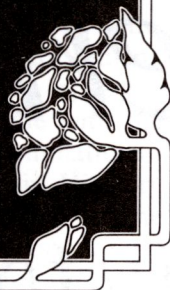
—1 Peter 4:8-10

. . . See that you excel in this grace of giving. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

2 Corinthians 8:7-8

Evangelical Visitor

ering"



The practical view

by Barb Peckman

I'm not very good with face-to-face warm fuzzies. I tend to get tongue tied or stutter or my mind goes blank, so I will share some of the practical ways I try to accomplish 2 Corinthians 8:7-8 and 1 Peter 4:8-10. God wants us to be leaders in the spirit of cheerful giving. People are eager for it and this is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond words.

I believe more people would do encouraging things if they only knew what to do. A key for me is to get ideas by listening to people. The words *I wish . . . I like . . . I would . . . I need . . . If only . . . I hate to . . .* are bound to be followed by clues of what that individual would appreciate sometime. You could keep a card file of such information.

Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay for the night. God has given each of you some special abilities. Be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others many kinds of blessings in the name of Jesus.

Remember birthdays, celebrate small things, recognize accomplishments and efforts. Look for reasons to babysit, take a batch of brownies, mow a yard. Don't wait until you are asked. Offer to assist with the nitty gritty—wash a stack of dirty dishes, do a pile of mending, wash some hard-to-reach windows, paint. . . .

Put notes in lunchboxes, inside shoes, post-em notes on mirrors, messages on the back of bedroom doors; put a magnet on a refrigerator door or inside a gasoline tank lid, pencil in a note in a choir book ("Smile, you're sounding great!") Card shops are full of ideas.

Do the unexpected: Send an "I'm thinking of you" card on the anniversary of the death of a loved one. Take a meal to an expectant mother before her baby is born. Hang a banner on the porch. Offer to clean or do laundry for one who's making daily trips to visit a wife or child in the hospital. Volunteer to help a Sunday school teacher cut out classroom decorations. Grow flowers to give away (a bouquet of pussy willows in February, lilacs in May, gourds in October). Give a recipe for a low-calorie dish to someone who is diligently dieting. Invite someone who doesn't get out much to help bake cookies.

Offering a sticker or a pipe cleaner to a child in the grocery store who is giving his Mom fits may make his day, his Mom's day, other customers' day, and the storekeeper's day. Cheer a harried clerk by specifically thanking her for tallying your purchases accurately or compliment her for her cheerfulness. I heard recently, "Be kind, everyone has a battle."

Some may be more naturally inclined to be encouragers, but it is something that can be learned. I believe we need to teach our children to be givers at an early age. My mother allowed me to experience the joy of sacrificial giving when I chose to give away a new doll received for a seventh birthday, or by graciously accepting my treat of an ice cream cone bought with my very own

dime. She was, and still is, an example to me. She took my four-year-old daughter shopping to pick out a new tea-towel for my birthday last year. Never was a little girl more anxious for her mommy's birthday to come. The radiance on her face because she could offer me a gift was sheer delight. Mothers, help your children make things for other people, or write notes to missionary children. When you are babysitting other children, help them make something for their mothers. Take another's small children shopping to purchase a present for their Mom next Easter or Christmas. By accepting children's small gifts—putting weeds in vases, pretty rocks in bowls, handiwork on refrigerators—you'll inspire them to be givers.

Sometimes I am hesitant to act upon an idea because I am afraid of being misunderstood or of being inappropriate by having mistakenly perceived a situation, or of being vulnerable or offensive to someone, or of risking the possibility of someone taking advantage of me. But I try to remember how or when I've wished for a helping hand or was appreciative of a note of thanks or buoyed up by a phone call.

It does cost a lot—a lot of energy, a lot of time, a lot of creativity and yes, sometimes, some dollars. Second Corinthians 8:12 tells us, "If you are really eager to give, then it isn't important how much you have to give. God wants you to give what you have, not what you haven't" (TLB). My prayer is that even though I fail at carrying out some of these ideas, you may have been prompted to create an uplifting encounter with someone.

When I've received a compliment, it builds my self confidence and I'm much more apt to give another a good word. I'm convinced that by patting another on the back, you free one to spread joy to another. By encouraging, you have potentially touched the hearts of many more. It's contagious! ■

History forgotten

Missing the opportunity to learn

by Douglas Kelchner

The following article was recently submitted unsolicited to the Board for Brotherhood Concerns. Drawing on his experience prior to becoming Brethren in Christ, the author calls for peace education in our churches, reinforcing what others are saying and what the BBC has been working on in a variety of ways. As you read, consider these questions: Is the author right that people in "the pew" no longer hold to the historic nonresistance position of the Brethren in Christ Church? If so, is this really what we want? If not, how can we "ignite the hearts" of Brethren in Christ people so that history is not forgotten and we don't miss opportunities to teach and learn about peace and nonresistance? The Board for Brotherhood Concerns is interested in responses from laypeople, pastors, and church leaders. Write to the BBC at P.O. Box 246, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

Yes, I am new to the Brethren in Christ Church, but the relationship feels so much like "home" that I quickly had a sense that I have always been part of this family. While it is easy to forget or at least no longer focus on many years in another denomination, the fact remains that I do have a prior heritage. It is that personal background that I wish to bring to bear on our current thinking regarding militarism and military chaplaincy.

Several years ago when I at first met ministers from the Brethren in Christ Church, I became acquainted with what was for me a whole new issue. I had never heard of "peace churches" or "nonresistance" and my only image of a pacifist was a negative one from the Vietnam War era. Other doctrinal issues had attracted me to the Brethren in Christ Church, but part of the journey was having to face and study the nonresistance position of the church. I am still on that journey, but it has been life-changing, to say the least.

I became interested in what my prior denomination believed through the years on this subject and I was shocked with what I discovered. How could it have been that I was

raised a third generation minister, educated in a denominational college and served as a pastor for 19 years and never once even heard that the denomination had been officially pacifist until 1967? How did a denomination that is only now 76 years old come to this change?

Begun in 1914, the Assemblies of God leadership established the official position of the church as pacifist with President Wilson in 1917 as they faced World War I. This position was confirmed by being adopted as a bylaw in 1927 when the church finalized a constitution. But something changed between the two World Wars. Many people in the pew now looked at things differently. While thousands joined the armed services during WWII, only 35 kept with the conscientious objector provision and served in a camp. By the Korean War the position of the church was nothing more than words on paper. Then in 1967 a new bylaw was adopted so that the official stance as a pacifist church was ended and the church reflected the viewpoint of the membership.

This change is interesting. It began with a change of viewpoint not by church leadership but in the pew.

While those in the pew were thinking, saying and doing one thing, the leadership was thinking, saying and doing another. The leadership's direction was "official" but what was in the pew is what was in reality "official." All the church publications reaffirmed a position that just was no longer there. In fact, even though the pew had changed by World War II, it took another 25 years for the bylaw to change.

There is an interesting twist to the changes that happened. During World War II the first apparent stamp of approval came with the first member of the denomination to become a military chaplain. His story was a prominent article in the church's national publication. Could it be that through this door of ministry and service other dramatic changes can gain validity and "approval"?

I see a pattern that merits thought. A church is born with a pacifist conviction. That conviction lessens in the pew. Chaplaincy further widens the gap between the "position" and the "actions" from the pew by granting a type of approval. The publications keep printing the historic statements but they have lessening impact and eventually the change is complete. The conviction that nonresistance is the scriptural position for the church is gone.

What does this say to us as Brethren in Christ? Certainly this is a time for some serious thought. No one can deny there is a change in the pew on the issues of nonresistance. This is not only acknowledged in official publications, but I have witnessed it firsthand. Members ask if nonresistance is important anymore, and preaching on the subject is like plowing new ground. While it is new ground for me as a newcomer to the church, many who have been in the pew for a long time have given the subject little or no thought. Now we have reached a time when many are giving thoughtful consideration to military chaplaincy. Yes, the publications still proclaim the "official" words, but one wonders "what if" the position was up for vote by the "pew."

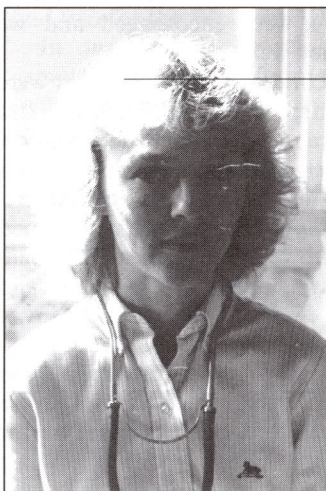
My reporting to you the history of my background is not intended to reflect on the position taken by this sister body of believers. Each denomination and believer must come to their own position with God, and I admit to still being "in process" on this topic as well. I have shared it to encourage us to think carefully, consider the parallels that may exist, and to make sure history is not forgotten.

I was raised without knowing and thus without an opportunity to learn, to develop a personal thought pattern or share in shaping direction. No one ever bothered to see the subject as important enough to address it, not even in college. I wonder how much our Brethren in Christ youth and children know about nonresistance. We must not neglect the opportunity to provide them all that is necessary so that they have the chance to make it "their" position.

Maybe how vigorously we address the subject with our children is more important than anything we simply keep "on the books." Publications, studies or reports, while important, are not the key. Somehow we must find a way to ignite the heart of local pastors, Sunday School teachers and most of all the "pew."

To forget is to miss the opportunity to learn. ■

*Douglas Kelchner is the senior pastor of the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church. Background information came from **Anointed to Serve**, written by William Menzies, Ph.D., and published by Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Mo. This is a history of the Assemblies of God, of which pages 326-328 should be noted.*



"Serving with MCC as a nurse in Bolivia I learned the value of other cultures. I also learned to work with a diversity of people, and that has helped me in my work in North America."

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Joyful renewal

AN EVANGELIST'S JOURNAL

by Henry A. Ginder

The past several bienniums, many have spoken and written on renewal. The emphasis was good. It included prayer and introspection. It included doctrinal rethinking and administrative restructuring. I believe that each of these contributed to the spiritual deepening and renewing experienced in many of our congregations. This I have felt in a number of spiritual growth series my wife and I have held in the Brethren in Christ churches. It was expressed in rich, old-fashioned altar praying as well as persons sharing with other persons while sitting in the pews following the service.

Many have also come to new life in Christ, responding to diverse types of invitations. Our final hymn is always a prayer hymn. I remind each congregation that they are saying a prayer while singing. "Breathe on Me Breath of God" is one of my favorites. Another is "O To Be Like Thee." This approach has been precipitating joyful renewal.

Renewal calls for cleansing and commitment (Isa. 6:1-11 and Ps. 51:10). Renewal also involves "getting rid." It involves heart and Spirit (please read Ezek. 18:31). Don't we praise God that joyful renewal is a continuing process? "Inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). This points to joyful renewal for the seeker, the person who continually seeks for more of God by the aid of the Word and the Holy Spirit. I now say that sanctification is a crisis within a process. The process of living a holy life begins when we are converted and continues until we are with the Lord forever. Somewhere the crisis of full surrender and biblical cleansing needs to be experienced. Hence, a crisis within a process. The holiness message is not a message of limitation, rather a message of liberation. I say also that holiness does not change our personality unless carnality has cramped our personality. It is great joy to be set free in Christ to live

a fully surrendered, cleansed life by the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

I feel an urge to again bring before us my understanding of the fruit and the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. For Spirit-filled believers, the fruit of the Spirit is universally required and the gifts of the Spirit should be willingly received. Gifts don't prove spirituality. Fruit does that, but the gifts of the Spirit are for a fruitful ministry and for the growth of the body.

This portion of this article is being written on a plane returning from Oregon. During the last four weeks we were greatly fulfilled in spiritual growth ministries in four different churches. The first was three nights in our own Pacific Highway Church. It was a great joy to work with Pastor Denny Sanders and his Linda. God is doing good things there. We were encouraged and we believe they were also.

The second and third churches were non-Brethren in Christ. Then our last week was a return to the Pedee Evangelical Church. We were with them for four days two and a half years ago. At that time I told of a large church where I had spoken two years earlier near Portland, where they had placed me in a motel and that I asked the pastor if I might invite the membership to join me at the restaurant each morning for breakfast. This worked very well. Each morning from six to nine o'clock persons joined me for discussion of spiritual concerns. When

the Pedee pastor heard of this, they announced a Breakfast Club in the parsonage. That year we had from four to six each morning.

This year again, they announced a Coffee Club in the parsonage. This is only the third time in hundreds of meetings where I was involved in a daily breakfast fellowship. I must tell you—it was a joyful renewal. Each morning Rev. and Mrs. Trosen had from 9 to 13 persons for breakfast. Many members sent in rolls, fruit, eggs, and sausage.

After breakfast we shared for a few minutes on missions contacts we have had, then invited questions on last night's sermon. This discussion lasted for one hour or more. One man was saved only three weeks before. He eagerly discussed everything. His teenage daughter *always* had questions—everything from forgiveness, what to confess and where, restitution, where and when, Calvinism, holiness, faith in prayer, how specific may you be in your prayers, etc.

The new Christian's wife said, "We need a washer. May we pray and ask for one?" While Pastor Trosen, Jr. answered and encouraged them, Pastor Trosen, Sr. said, "We have an extra washer. We'll deliver it to you tomorrow." What joy around that breakfast table! We would then close the session with a prayer time. It was high joy for everyone. Please be assured that these are for us days of joyful renewal. In Phil. 2:1-4 Paul expresses his desire to have his joy complete, then lists seven things they should do so that his joy might be complete. This report should encourage us into this new dimension of joyful renewal. . . .

We traveled east to our home and in a few days shared with the Iron Springs Brethren in Christ Church, where Maurice Bender is Pastor. Here we were surprised to find a young lady from a Roman Catholic church, new in our church. She discussed specifics of our lives which surprised us. She said she bought the book *Leaders Among Brethren* to study the story of our lives. Here too, we found joyful renewal. There was a spirit of obedience.

Now, we are sharing with the Brethren in Christ congregation at Canoe Creek. This congregation has had an unusual benefit during the leadership of Mark Slagenweit as pastor. They built a beautiful new church and beautifully remodeled the old church and the parsonage into a delightful and comfortable house. These two projects were done without any debt. That itself could be called joy-

The holiness message is not a message of limitation, but rather is a message of liberation.

Since his retirement as bishop, Henry Ginder has continued his ministry as evangelist and representative of Brethren in Christ World Missions.

ful renewal. (I am now writing here in this lovely parsonage.)

Recently there was a pastoral change. Robert Patterson, a son of this congregation who has a broad experience, is now the pastor. He is a graduate of Messiah College. He served as associate pastor to a Nazarene church while he served in the Air Force. Here too God is granting joyful renewal.

Pastor Rob prayerfully entered into his assignment. He soon did the following: (1) enlisted older people (many widows) to pray daily for one hour for spiritual renewal. He calls this the "Canoe Creek Crew"; (2) organized young couples to be involved in church growth—To minister to their unsaved friends and to the "stay-at-home" Christians. This is paying off; (3) established cell groups for Bible study, prayer and fellowship; and (4) intensified concern for teenagers. Several are attending these meetings regularly. The pastor is concerned for their spiritual involvement. A number of community men are now being saved in their homes, then later are coming to the altar as a public confession of faith. These new converts are providing a climate of joyful renewal.

I talked with the pastor about having a fellowship breakfast each morning in a small Kountry Kitchen which is very popular among the local people. One of the ladies of the church is a waitress there. We now have had two breakfasts. Seven to nine persons attended. Several are new Christians. Others are community Christians who have now identified with our church. One is a strong young man—not a Christian yet. (Well—not yesterday when I wrote, but today he is. He was saved last night in a very special service.)

In these breakfasts we talked about Bible translations, the power of the Spirit filled life . . . of course, hunting stories also. A new convert of only two months says a strong "Praise the Lord!" The next morning we discussed prayer, fasting, and various types of emotional responses to spiritual joy, such as tears of joy.

Around the breakfast table there were many tears of joy. Jim is a new Christian. He removed his glasses to dry his tears of joy. He then said, "Bishop, once my soul is as clean as my eyeballs, I'll be all right." Bro. Jim paid for all our breakfasts the first and second mornings. When the pastor challenged Jim's generosity, he said, "I spent thousands of dollars in barrooms, so I can surely do this."

Another new Christian, Charlie, gave his testimony there at the breakfast. He told how the pastor got him and his wife Barbara started in Bible study before they were saved. They had studied until 12:30 the night before he was saved. The next morning, as he was driving his truck across the mountain, God came and saved him. He cried and had peace and knew the Lord saved him. His wife Barbara looked at me and said, "Yes Bishop, something just kicked him in the back of the head." We call this the witness of the Spirit, but how delightful to be with new Christians who don't know how to say it.

When Barbara saw Charlie's joy, she called the pastor and asked him to help her be saved. During our service there, Barbara came to the altar to give a public confession to her new life in Christ.

We also discussed how to forsake our sin without forsaking our sinning friends. I encouraged them to keep close to their pastor. One said, "If we don't, he'll keep close to us." (Then a good laugh!) Brothers and sisters, this is joyful renewal.

Through the month of January, we gave four spiritual growth series in Florida—two for the Brethren in Christ and two for the Wesleyan Church.

In our Orlando church, the youth group became beautifully involved. Also in the Wesleyan church in Naples, a

number of new couples became much involved in regular attendance and special prayer times. On the youth night, the pastor heard one rather tough boy say, "Well, it was worthwhile to come tonight." Praise God, the gospel is effective across the generational lines.

One of the best things of recent days is the way the church is turning to prayer. The crises in our world contribute to this, but also a real concern for genuine and joyful renewal.

One of our best business friends attends a large Baptist church in Orlando; 6,500 attend Sunday mornings. Several weeks ago the pastor preached with burden and called for a Saturday, 8 to 11:00 a.m., prayer time. They used the Old Testament title "Solmn Assembly." The pastor requested that folks fast next Friday and come to the Solmn Assembly only if they could stay for the three hours. Between 3,500 and 4,000 persons attended. Highway I-4 was jammed back at the exit to the church with people coming to pray.

I was very deeply moved when I heard this account. I said, "If Henry Ginder is so deeply moved, how must our loving Lord feel?"

Yes, these are great days! God is moving!

I am pleased to call this joyful renewal! ■

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God at work in our world

They also serve who pray

Intercessors—Ontario and Alberta, Canada

Dear Mr. Keefer,

In your January letter, you mentioned that there were 550 prayer warriors during the past year. I am writing to inform you that there were 559.

Last spring, the Lord put it on my heart to become a prayer warrior, and I wrote asking to be put on your mailing list. There were 10 of us already involved in the prayer chain at our local church. The Lord laid it on my heart to add the requests from around the world, which I received from you, to the local concerns we shared and to present the need for world intercessors to this group of dedicated prayer warriors. Every month I have been photocopying for this group the materials you send me, and the needs have been faithfully lifted up to God.

God has blessed all of us in so many special ways. What a privilege to be in his service and be used by him!

Sincerely,
O.B.

Dear friends at Missions Office,

Just a note to tell you how much I have appreciated the monthly news regarding the needs of our missionaries. When I first decided to become a World Christian Intercessor, I felt it would help me know how to pray for missionaries as individuals.

Soon I became involved in getting a

missions committee going in our congregation. I really felt the Lord's leading me, a 77-year-old, to take on this challenge. It was largely this renewed prayer commitment in my life that brought me to the place where I said, "Here I am; use me in this way if it is your will."

At first I had only intended to help get it all started, but I'm still the chairlady of the committee. And we are getting ready now for our fifth annual missions conference! The Lord has helped me in a miraculous way. He has given me good health and the ability to lead, so I have no reason to quit. I have a good committee. Even though I can't do the "leg work" any more, they are willing to do my share as long as I provide the leadership.

It is interesting for me to see how the Lord prepared me for this. During my 60s, I helped lead Pioneer Clubs for eight years. Though I went into this reluctantly, I felt the Lord's leading. That organization gives its leaders wonderful training in seminars and retreats. That has enabled me to do what I am doing now in my 80s! I just wanted to give this testimony to the Lord's leading; I certainly would not be doing it of myself.

Yours in his service,
M.W.

Mountaintop experience

John Sider—Rio Grande Institute, Texas

When we visited Malawi and Mozambique in the fall of 1989, we became aware of the spiritual warfare in which our people there are involved. One afternoon I climbed the footpath up the mountain until it met the vehicle road, and then I walked down the road toward the village where Mark and Jane (Sider) live.

I stopped part way down the mountain at a place where I could get a view of the valley. Far to the right was the village of Ntamila, where John and Esther Edmonds live. Far to the left was the area where Phil and Doreen Byers would probably be living. In the center of my "scene" was the village of Mbalula, where Mark and Jane were then living (they have since moved a short distance away to the village of Mphalume).

Dotted throughout the valley were mosques, which represent one of the greatest challenges to the missionaries there: the combination of Islam and tribal animism. This creates a setting of spiritual darkness that is intense. We felt it to some extent in the short time we were there, but the missionaries who live there feel it much more keenly.

As I looked over the valley, I began to talk to the Lord. I asked him how the valley could be brought from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light and how the strongholds of Satan could be torn down. His answer was abrupt: "Pray!"

As we pursued the conversation further, I heard him say to me, "Go back to Canada and the United States, and mobilize people to pray." So, in a number of the churches where we had missionary meetings when we returned, I related the incident I have just described. Ethel and I continue to pray that the people of the Mangochi Valley will be released from Satan's power.

Family transition

Susie Gilmore—Caracas, Venezuela

Presently we are each trying to deal with the fact that, within a few short months, we will leave Venezuela, our home for almost 10 years. It seems like a "bittersweet" time as we weigh in our minds the memories we have as a family, but God has been so good to us.

Just this past Sunday we sat and marveled at the goodness of God as we watched our church fill up with more people than ever for a Sunday morning service: there were 148 in attendance. As of January 1, Gord gave up his pastoral duties at the Montalban congregation. He was replaced by a pastoral team of Mike Holland (fellow missionary), Oscar Romero and José Otamendi (Venezuelan Brethren in Christ). Gord will continue to serve these men as a pastoral counselor on the team. It makes our leaving considerably less painful knowing that the Lord has prepared capable and dedicated people to carry on his work once we leave. Help us support these new pastors and their families as they take on these new important responsibilities.

We intend to make good use of our

Begins MCC assignment in Canada

Pauline M. Cober of Wellesley, Ont., began a one-year MCC assignment in October 1990 as inventory processor for SELFHELP Crafts in New Hamburg, Ont.

Cober is a member of **Rosebank Brethren in Christ Church** in Petersburg, Ont. Her husband is Bruce Cober. Their children are Sheri and Larry Vanderbent, Brenda and Brad.



last months here. We will try to do all we can to fulfill what God has called us to do. Pray with us that we will make wise use of our time.

They never had a chance

Becky Fretz—Bangkok, Thailand

I feel sad. In the last weeks there were two tragic accidents in Thailand which took the lives of more than 100 people. Many more are in serious condition in the hospital and will probably die yet.

One accident was a drowning of more than 40 students when an overloaded and off-balance boat capsized. The other was a gas explosion from a tank truck, which sent a wall of fire that instantly engulfed the traffic on the street, buildings and passers-by.

In God's hands we are kept safe not only spiritually, but in times of physical danger (see Isaiah 43:1-3). But as I heard about these tragedies, I was troubled about all the Thai people who lost their lives in a moment, probably without ever having heard the good news of

Jesus' power to save. People who were there said the gas explosion was like hell; the victims went from one hell to another. I ask, "Why?" It doesn't seem fair that they should have had to die without knowing Christ while I (and other Christians who are ready to die) remained safe. It doesn't seem fair that in the West we know so much about Jesus, have so many opportunities to learn about him. We can choose to believe him or to turn our backs and ignore him. But these people never even had a chance to hear who he is. ■

Marykutty's secret source

by Leoda Buckwalter

Marykutty looked at the red mixture in the bowl and recoiled . . . it looked like blood! As a daughter-in-law in this Malayalee home, it was her business to do what she was ordered; but how she hated it! Why did her father-in-law want this bloody mixture? And *what* was going on behind those closed doors, a room she was forbidden to enter?

She glanced with terror at the door which held the heartbeat of all this mystery in the family: people coming and going quietly, her father-in-law taking her husband in with him and then coming out with his strange formulas (or were they recipes?) which, when concocted, looked like blood!

One day Marykutty remembered that she had a power to which *she* could turn. Hadn't her parents told her about the Lord Jesus Christ? This satanic thing which raised its sinister head each day didn't have to get her down. She would pray!

Thus began the vigil in Marykutty's life: prayer counteracting the witchcraft in which her father-in-law and husband engaged. And to bolster her Christian faith, she listened daily to the Bible reading programs in Malayalam over the radio. The voice was soothing and affirmative. It gave her comfort and strength.

Her two sons began to listen, too. Marykutty's prayers effectively kept her husband from learning the secrets of black magic. Witchcraft died in that home when the father of the home passed away. Marykutty's husband took to farming. Throughout, the radio Bible reading kept Mary and her boys steady in their faith, and the elder son decided to go to seminary and train for the ministry.

* * * * *

We met Marykutty and her boys under interesting circumstances. The Accounts Officer of the Far East Broadcasting Association, K. C. Mammen, took us to his home in Kerala for a vacation. Proudly, he introduced us to neighbors and friends. And he had an aunt whom he hadn't seen for years . . . we must go and find her.

We drove to the house, parked the car, and went to the door with Mammen leading the way. His aunt opened the door, and the boys soon came to see who had arrived. Soon all were excitedly talking in Malayalam. We sat in the living room while the aunt and sons pulled Mammen into the kitchen. There we heard them laughing hilariously. We wondered what caused it.

When they joined us, Mammen explained. His was the voice they—Marykutty and her sons—had heard over the radio each day! He had done the Malayalam Bible readings throughout those testing years, and they recognized him by his voice.

How wonderful are the ways of God! Mammen had faced temptation when asked to do a double set of books in a commercial firm. He refused and lost his job. Then the Lord brought him to us in Far East Broadcasting Association—India, and he has worked faithfully there for the past 15 years. Along with his office duties, he took time to produce the Malayalam Bible readings. Little did he know that his faithfulness to the Lord would produce such positive results in the lives of his relatives! And how many others are blessed through the radio ministry? Eternity will reveal some interesting stories, but we thank God that we had a little peek before getting to heaven! ■

Leoda Buckwalter and her husband, Allen, served for 20 years with Brethren in Christ Missions in India and for 20 years with the Far East Broadcasting Association in India. Currently they reside in Elizabethtown, Pa.

The fairness of God

by Frank King, Jr.

Fairness is just one of the innumerable attributes of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. So let us focus our attention on this fairness to see how it relates to total world evangelization, and how that in turn affects our lives in this present time.

Fairness means to be just, honest, equitable, or marked by impartiality. Over and over in the Old and New Testaments we are assured that there is no respect of persons with God. He is fair! He does not pit one language group or color group against another or favor one at the expense of another. Job 34:19 tells us that God does not regard the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands. So God is not a respecter of persons, because he is fair. This harmonizes with 2 Chronicles 19:7, which reminds us that there is no "injustice or partiality or bribery" with the Lord our God.

One of the best known verses in the Bible will help illustrate just how fair the Lord really is. It is John 3:16, the first verse many of us memorized. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

"Whoever believes" means that salvation is possible for everyone who hears the gospel story. The color of one's skin, the language spoken, and the social, cultural, or economic standing of an individual do not make any difference to the Lord. There are *no* exceptions or limitations to this invitation of "whoever" which reflects the fairness of Almighty God.

The word world in John 3:16 brings to mind another verse showing the depth of God's love and his fairness. 1 John 2:2 tell us "... he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours [the English-speaking world], but also for the sins of the whole world [for *all* men]." You see God is fair, 100 per-

cent fair—all of the time! He cannot be otherwise!

Another well-known verse which shows the scope of God's equality and impartiality is 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is . . . not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." It is God's will that *all* men be saved, whether it's you, your neighbor or relative, the delivery person, the one you work beside, political leaders, the Indians of South America or even the witch doctors and shamans of the Far East. God does not delight nor joy in the spiritual death of any person, for all are made in his image, and it cost him the life of his dear Son to redeem them.

By God's fairness in loving all humanity and accepting any person who believes in his Son, Jesus Christ, he had laid the foundation to make it possible that representatives from every kindred, tongue, people, and nation be in the Body of Christ—his universal Church.

So in the Bride of Christ, which is his universal Church in the completed state, we find his revealed plan, his will, and his fairness exemplified. He wills that some from *every* segment of society be included in this unique group.

Now in order that God's will and desires be fulfilled, the Lord told us in a number of places in the Scriptures that we are to go into *all* the world and preach the gospel.

Since the Lord has endowed you with the ministry and word of reconciliation, it is best that you be busy with this work.

The Master and Creator of the universe devised the plan and had it recorded in his Word for all believers to follow. God is so fair that he wants *everyone* in *each* generation to hear the gospel so the Church can be completed. He doesn't want anybody denied the privilege of hearing the gospel. It is his desire that every soul be with him in heaven for all eternity.

Since God is counting on us believers to propagate his glorious and wonderful gospel worldwide, he has shown his fairness once again. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 we find that God has equipped every believer, at salvation, with the ministry and the word of reconciliation. We are *all* treated alike. God is so fair. There are no second-rate or underclass Christians as far as the Lord enabling or equipping us. There are no spiritually handicapped Christians; the Lord shortchanges no one. He's totally fair. *Every* born-again person has this ministry and word of reconciliation, with no exceptions. Our stewardship of these precious assets compels us to share the gospel worldwide, to every soul, as the Lord wills.

With three thousand dialectically different groups of people in our generation waiting to hear the good news that Jesus saves, we'd better be fair in our efforts to evangelize the whole world as the Lord planned for us to do. We need to reconcile people from all language groups to Jesus Christ by preaching the gospel to *every* creature, and we need to do it now.

Untold millions of hopeless souls are waiting in whitened harvest fields for laborers such as *you* to bring them light, hope, and peace in Jesus Christ. Since the Lord has endowed *you* with the ministry and word of reconciliation, it is best that you be busy with this work—even to regions beyond the present sound of the gospel. If you haven't started yet, you can start *now*. Then you can reap the joy and blessing of taking the gospel to souls that otherwise may never hear.

As you go carrying that precious message, keep in mind 1 Corinthians 15:58, "My dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Of course it isn't! Building upon the foundation of Jesus Christ brings the eternal benefits of saved souls and rewards for the laborers.

God, in his fairness, will bless and reward you as you step out in faith and obedience to his Word. ■

Frank King, Jr., is a missions representative of New Tribes Mission. Reprinted by permission.

NAE Convention Report

The annual meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) convened in St. Louis, Missouri, March 5-7, 1991. Keynote speakers such as evangelist Luis Palau, futurist/researcher George Barna, and church developer Frank Tillapaugh effectively communicated the theme of the convention, "Proclaiming Jesus Christ . . . Together!" We were challenged to understand that for the church to rise above the survivor mentality, we must become proactive and aggressive in evangelism and nurture. In most congregations less than 20 percent growth comes from

converts outside the church but with whom we have daily contact. To win the lost, Christians must become more understanding of the environment in which they live (1 Chron. 12:32). Discipleship and obedience to Christ involve both being (becoming like Christ in attitudes and motives) and doing (evangelizing and serving).

The location, St. Louis, undoubtedly impacted the number of Brethren in Christ in attendance who included: Sam Brubaker, a member of the Social Actions Committee, with his wife Lucy; Graybill Brubaker, with his spouse

Ethel, representing Brethren in Christ World Missions and Evangelical Foreign Missions Association; Arthur Climenhaga, former executive director of NAE and representing World Relief; and Harvey Sider, Brethren in Christ denominational representative. These six profited by times of informal discussion as well as a breakfast meeting.

During the past several years, the NAE Board of Administration has given some attention to the problem of racism in America. The council endorsed a statement on racism as well as one on the Persian Gulf crisis. Thanks to people like Sam Brubaker, the influence of the peace position was reflected in the statements adopted by the body.

The next NAE, the fiftieth anniversary, is planned for March 3-5, 1992, in Chicago. —reported by Harvey R. Sider, Moderator

NAE Convention Notebook

Stewardship begins with the pastor

An effective stewardship campaign begins with the pastor, said William McConkey, senior pastor of the Sutter Presbyterian Church in University City, Mo., to the Christian Stewardship Association luncheon audience. "It puts credibility in our teaching when our lifestyles reflect proper stewardship," he said.

McConkey said that when instructed, lay people usually accept their stewardship responsibilities with joy. "Peoples' need to give is greater than their need to receive."

The word is coming to America: problem or opportunity?

"A hundred years ago we sent missionaries across the ocean," said Raymond Bakke, professor of ministry at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and director of International Urban Associates. "Now the nations are coming to our cities." Bakke set the theme for the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association luncheon.

"Today, inner city ministries are more like foreign missions than home missions," Bakke said. "The United States is the largest Jewish nation in the world,

the largest Irish nation, even the largest Swedish. We have the second largest black population, next to Nigeria."

Bakke observed that Islam is the fastest-growing religion in our country. "Mosques are now located where urban evangelical churches used to be. Islam offers brotherhood, whereas evangelicals have offered separation and alienation."

He critiqued traditional American foreign missions strategies and philosophies. "We've sold missions on the dung-hut, thatch-roof model far too long."

To rekindle vision, go back to basics

James E. Plueddemann, professor of Christian education at Wheaton College, told a National Christian Education Association luncheon that "now is the time to rekindle the vision of Sunday school."

Plueddemann said that some suggest that to improve Sunday school, churches must get a management consultant or follow the latest innovative programming to grow. "We don't need new plans or programs as much as a vision for what God can do," he continued. "If we go back to basics, rekindling a vision of

the greatness of God by focusing on his means of grace, God's Word and his Holy Spirit to change lives, we will see growth in church Sunday school programs."

Time to embrace urban mindset, Tillapaugh urges

Evangelicals face a strategic opportunity in America in the 1990s, but unless they are willing to rethink their approach to ministry, they will fail in their effort to redeem the nation for Christ, according to Frank Tillapaugh, who addressed the Evangelism and Home Missions Association luncheon.

The senior pastor of Bear Valley Baptist Church in Denver, Colo., noted that evangelicals, while they enjoy unprecedented visibility in America, have not meaningfully penetrated the culture through dynamic churches. "We have all kinds of parachurch organizations, schools, publishing houses, but we don't have the kind of churches that minister to the needs of Americans today."

Tillapaugh issued a strong challenge: "Most of our churches today still operate on the basis of rural values of status quo, sameness, and harmony. Unfortunately, American people today have embraced urban values of change, diversity, and conflict management. Unless our churches adopt this kind of mindset, we will not reach America for Christ."

Church News

Allegheny Conference

On Mar. 24 the **Abundant Life** church, Uniontown, Pa., had a goal of 302 for their Friend Day service at the Uniontown YMCA. The theme was "Forever Friends." A luncheon followed. • Anthony Myers of the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., left Mar. 25 for a three-year term of service with Teen Missions. On Mar. 24 the congregation enjoyed an evening praise service by the combined handbell choirs of the Air Hill, Elizabethtown, and Pequea churches. • Rev. and Mrs. Neville West provided the service Mar. 3 for the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg. The Hoppers were in concert on April 7. • Mar. 8 was game night at the **Canoe Creek** church, Hollidaysburg, Pa. An Easter sunrise service was followed by coffee and donuts. • An April 20 workday for the **Chambersburg** church included parsonage renovations. A recent auction netted \$11,510 for Advancement Ministries. The congregation hosted regional conference April 5-6.

On Mar. 3, the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, saw the film "Molder of Dreams." There was a welcome home from London meal for Bryan Sollenberger on Mar. 17. • In February and March, the **Green Spring** congregation, Newville, Pa., viewed the Zeigler film series "Raising Positive Kids in a Negative World." • C. Gordon Olson led a Mar. 17 missions conference for the **Hollowell** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., on reaching the Islamic world with the gospel. • Edith Miller spoke in the Mar. 13 service of the **Martinsburg**, Pa. church. "He Set Us Free" by Hugh Livingston was the Easter cantata. • Rev. and Mrs. Graybill Brubaker were speakers at the Mar. 10 MPF service of the **Montgomery** church, Mercersburg, Pa. Revival services with Mark Slagenweit began on Mar. 17.

On Mar. 3 Pastor Verno began a sermon series for the **New Guilford** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., on "The Basics of Vibrant Spiritual Health." • Peter Rice of Jews for Jesus presented "Christ in the Passover" on Mar. 10 at the **Paramount** church, Hagerstown, Md. • The **Spring Hope** church, Schellsburg, Pa., is planning revival services with Henry Ginder for May 19-26. • On the morning of Mar. 24, the children of the **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md., presented "The Story of Jesus." They enjoyed an afternoon egg hunt.

Atlantic Conference

The **Conoy** church, Elizabethtown, Pa., had Mar. 3-6 spring renewal services with Bishop Hoffman and his family. The Ministers of Music were in concert on Mar. 17. • On Mar. 10 Michael Umholtz reported on Youth with a Mission activities to the **Cross Roads** church, Mount Joy, Pa. The choir presented "The Day He Wore My Crown" on Mar. 24 at the church, and on Mar. 30 at Conoy. • At the **Elizabethtown** church, a celebration of the Brethren in Christ on five continents began at 4:30 on missions Sunday, Mar. 10. It was followed by a multi-ethnic meal at which members were encouraged to don apparel from the featured continents. Twelve members joined the church on Mar. 24. • The youth of the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., sponsored a spaghetti dinner on

Mar. 9. The church hosted regional conference on Mar. 22-23.

On Mar. 24 the **Fellowship Chapel** church, Bronx, N.Y., welcomed 14 students from Messiah College for a work project. The men enjoyed a retreat at Camp Deerpark Apr. 5-7. • Luke Keefer, Sr., spoke on prophecy at the Mar. 20 service of the **Free Grace** church, Millersburg, Pa. Renewal services began Mar. 3 with John E. Moyer. • On Mar. 3 the **Hummelstown**, Pa., service followed a worship guide prepared by the National Assoc. of Evangelicals. • The **Lancaster**, Pa., church hosted a Mar. 2 Christian education workers' breakfast and workshop. Apr. 12-14 was the second annual mom's retreat with Martha Starr as resource person. • Mar. 8-9 was the ladies' overnight get-away for the **Manor** women, Mountville, Pa., at the Green Acres Bed and Breakfast. They studied the book *Discover Your Spiritual Gift and Use It*.

Norm Kase shared on Mar. 24 with the **Master-sonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., about the mission work in London. The congregation viewed the "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" film series in March. • The **Millersville**, Pa., congregation enjoyed the Hetrick family in concert on Mar. 24. • Eight children of Owen and Iva (Spickler) Mummau hosted a drop-in party recently at the **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mount Joy, Pa., in honor of



the couple's 50th wedding anniversary. They were married Dec. 24, 1940. The congregation enjoyed a musical service on Mar. 17 by the Celebration Singers.

Special meetings with Sam Dalton began Mar. 24 at the **Palmyra**, Pa., church. The youth sponsored The Great Omelette Breakfast on Mar. 30. • Ron Elkin made a presentation April 7 to the **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa., on the Passover. The Pioneer Clubs sponsored a roller skating party on Mar. 16. • The youth of the **Refton**, Pa., congregation sponsored a pancake breakfast on Mar. 9. Doris Ortman, speaker and musician, was featured at the Mar. 14 Spring Ladies Day at Black Rock Retreat. • The Wednesday night AGAPE Club of the **Shenks** church, Elizabethtown, Pa., is producing three "TV programs" this spring on modern-day versions of Bible stories. • New pastor Frederick L. Geib was installed Mar. 24 at the **Silverdale**, Pa., church. His first pastorate was at Silverdale in 1970. He has since pastored at Shenks and Perkiomen Valley.

The **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg,

Pa., held Pioneer Clubs award night on Mar. 3. • Paul Witter has been succeeded as church treasurer after 24 years of service with the **Souderton**, Pa., congregation. Wayne Peachey of International Missions Inc. spoke at a recent missions conference about carrying the gospel to Muslims. • The men of the **Speedwell Heights** congregation, Lititz, Pa., enjoyed a fellowship breakfast Mar. 16 at Tollgate Inn. • Graybill Brubaker spoke at the Mar. 31 evening service of the **Stowe**, Pa., congregation. • On Mar. 5 the Atlantic Conference pastors and spouses had a discussion day at Kenbrook Bible Camp on "Pastors at Risk: Sexual Temptation in Ministry."

Canadian Conference

"Come Meet the Loonies" was the theme of the first meeting Mar. 5 of the new ladies' auxiliary of the **Bridlewood** church, Agincourt, Ont. • The **Cheapside** congregation, Nanticoke, Ont., had Mar. 3-10 revival services with Angel Valentin. • The **Delisle**, Sask., congregation observed Mar. 1 as World Day of Prayer with a 1:30 prayer meeting on the theme "On the Journey Together." • Hedy Sawatsky, member of the MCC Middle East tour in late 1990, spoke Mar. 10 to the **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont. • The **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., planned family bowling for Mar. 16. The young adults had a progressive supper on Mar. 23. • The **Houghton** congregation, Langton, Ont., recently baptized two persons and received three new members. The church hosted ladies of area churches for a Mar. 1 World Day of Prayer service.

Lynn Janzen was speaker recently for the **Kindersley**, Sask., ladies' secret sister night. On Mar. 10 Eldon Funk gave a report on his February Africa Food and Environmental Study Tour sponsored by MCC. • On Mar. 20 psychologist Errol Thompson spoke to the **Lakeside Community** church, Calgary, Alb., on the effect of war on children and the stresses of war. It was part of a special intergenerational evening which included Bible teaching on the history of the Mideast region and a take-home dove craft. • The **Massey Place** church, Saskatoon, Sask., held a two-hour seminar Mar. 13 on "Sharing Your Faith Effectively." The youth planned a sleigh ride and wiener roast for Mar. 8.

On Mar. 17 the **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., had "Bring a Friend Sunday" with a potluck meal and music by Harry and Phyllis Groten. • Becky Fretz spoke Mar. 31 to the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., church on missionary efforts in Thailand. The church held a joint Good Friday service with the Heise Hill congregation. • The youth of the **Port Colborne**, Ont., congregation sponsored a spaghetti supper on Mar. 16 with proceeds going to Operation Uplift. The video "Out of the Salt Shaker" was shown Mar. 10. • March missions emphasis speakers for the **Ridgemount**, Ont., congregation were Ernie and Jean Giles, Wendal Leythan, Sam and Rochelle Eller, Carl Fretz, and Sandra and Denise Cully. • The **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation had their annual winter picnic on Mar. 13. The film "The Radicals" was shown Mar. 17.

The **Springvale**, Ont., church recently had a three-month Wednesday evening study on "Mar-

riage: For Better or Worse." • The **Upper Oaks** congregation, Oakville, Ont., had their Vision Banquet on Apr. 6. • Mar. 3 concluded a Family Talk Series at the **Wainfleet**, Ont., church on topics such as Pieces of the Family Unit, Stresses of Family Life, and Youth. Guests were Jean Giles, Leonard Chester, Bob Leadley, and Bob Kentie. • Lee and Shelley Wenger of the **Welland**, Ont., church have left to become new associate pastoral couple at the **Boyle** church, St. Ann's, Ont. February offerings at Welland were sent to Operation Desert Rescue (World Vision) to help homeless civilians affected by the war. • The **Westheights** church, Kitchener, Ont., sponsored the World Day of Prayer service Mar. 1 for southern Kitchener. Six denominations participated, with speaker Sandi Hannigan and soloist Linda Zane.

Central Conference

The **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, had a Mar. 3 Guess Who's Coming to Dinner. • The singles of the **Ashland**, Ohio, church traveled to visit the Living Bible Museum on Mar. 16. On Easter, the children gave the musical, "Have You Heard the Good News?" • On Mar. 3 at **Beulah Chapel**, Springfield, Ohio, the Peace Sunday emphasis was on "How to End Wars." • Phil Keefer was missions speaker Apr. 14 for the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. • Barb Isles of Miami Valley Women's Center spoke at the Mar. 26 Christian Women's Fellowship Salad Luncheon hosted by the **Fairview** church, Englewood, Ohio. On Mar. 10, Keith Miller from Canton shared how God is working through various youth programs in his church.

The youth group of the **Highland** church, West Milton, Ohio, has a new name: RAD (Redeemed And Delivered). They attended the Michael W. Smith/D.C. Talk concert on Mar. 9. • The **Lakeview** church, Goodrich, Mich., began Sunday evening services in March: three weeks of Bible studies on Luke's Gospel, a Barnabas friendship group meeting, and a fifth Sunday singspiration. • The youth of the **Nappanee**, Ind., church sponsored a Mar. 17 spaghetti supper for the In-Between group (35-50s). On Mar. 14 Otilia Ndlovu shared with the women's fellowship about African customs. The church hosted regional conference on Mar. 22-23. • A pastor's class for new members met in March at the **Phoneton** church, Tipp City, Ohio. Paul Hostetler spoke on Easter morning.

The **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, congregation helped host members of the Continentals who were in town for a community concert. • The **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, enjoyed an adult fellowship Apr. 5 at Frank's Restaurant, then games at the parsonage. • The **Union Grove** church, New Paris, Ind., hosted the Apr. 12-14 Michiana Missions Conference. The topic of the Mar. 17 service was child abuse. • The **Valley Chapel** church, East Canton, Ohio, hosted the area women's retreat Apr. 13 with speaker Gay

Needed: two men (or two couples) to lift heavy cookware in the kitchen during Memorial Holiness Camp, July 20-28, 1991. Approximately 5 hours in kitchen daily. Food and lodging provided. If available, contact Beth Saba, 1000 White Oak Drive, Springfield, OH 45504 by June 30.

Stuchel of Child Evangelism Fellowship. • The **Western Hills** congregation, Cincinnati, Ohio, now has both men's and women's groups that meet on Saturday mornings. On Mar. 15 the men began painting the church interior. The women recently studied *Lord Change Me* by Christensen.

Midwest Conference

On Mar. 3 the **Abilene**, Kan., church sponsored the film "Angel in Ebony," story of Sammy Morris. The choir sang the cantata "Truly the Son of God" on Mar. 31. • The **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla., hosted regional conference on Mar. 15-17. • The **Oklahoma City**, Okla., church moved into their new building on Mar. 9 and dedicated it on Mar. 17. • On Mar. 6, the **Mound Park** congregation, Dallas Center, Iowa, got a view of Japan through slides from the Graybills. The congregation hosted a community breakfast on Mar. 13. • The **Rosebank** church, Hope, Kan., had an all-church ice cream social on Mar. 6. On Mar. 10 the youth gave a talent show and chili and taco salad dinner to raise money for summer camp. • Pastor Bowell of the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Kan., spoke at a community Lenten luncheon Mar. 6 at the United Church of Christ.

Pacific Conference

The **Pacific Highway** church, Salem, Ore., has had an active basketball team during the winter months in a local Christian league at Salem Academy. Cletus and Carol Mast and their daughter Abigail, candidates for mission service to

Bolivia with World Gospel Mission, spoke on Mar. 17. • On Mar. 22 and 23 the **Upland**, Calif., church hosted the Old Testament Walk Through the Bible seminar. The choir sang the musical "The Promised Redeemer" on Mar. 24 with soloist Doug Martin. A continental breakfast was enjoyed on Easter morning.

Southeast Conference

The **Community Bible** church, Sarasota, Fla., has new youth ministers: Leslie Brewer, Michael Fargnoli, and Bernie Benner. The Easter cantata "He Lives" was directed by Benner. • Pastor and Mrs. Gramm have agreed to a new five-year contract with the **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fla. On Mar. 10 former Bishop Charlie B. Byers, founder of the Gospel Tide Hour radio ministry, spoke to the congregation. Gospel Tide Hour is heard in much of the USA, and in seven other languages. It reaches Cuba from Miami, Fla. • On Mar. 3 the **Winchester**, Va., congregation observed Disability Awareness Week with the MCC video "Everyone Counts." John A. Byers spoke on Mar. 10.

Susquehanna Conference

Rachel Copenhaver of Sikalongo mission spoke at the Mar. 7 MPF service of the **Big Valley** church, Belleville, Pa. • The **Carlisle**, Pa., ladies had a night out Mar. 5 with a homemade bread and soup supper and pianist and speaker Doris Ortman. The church hosted General Board of Administration meetings on Mar. 8-9. • Basket-

E.V. Timelines

100 Years Ago

"Dohner—Died April 2, near Frederick, O., Sister Sarah Dohner, wife of Bro. Jacob Dohner, aged 31 years, 6 months and 17 days. She was converted and united with the church in 1889. . . . Services by Bros. J. B. Wingert and A. M. Engle."—*quoted from May 1, 1891 issue*

50 Years Ago

Bethany Church, Thomas [Okla.]—"Our spring revival began Sunday morning Mar. 16 with Rev. John Rosenberry of Knoxville, Iowa as evangelist."—*church news quoted from the May 5, 1941 issue*

25 Years Ago

"In a Neighbor Night program, April 29, the Chino congregation, Calif., was host to an Indian dinner. Esther Book, on furlough from India missions, was guest speaker."—*quoted from the May 9, 1966 issue under "Pacific Conference"*

10 Years Ago

"A recent guest of the Shenks congregation was Rev. Harold Paulus who presented slides of the San Francisco Mission."—*quoted from the May 25, 1981 issue*

If you would like to see news from your congregation listed in this column, consider volunteering to be a correspondent. Guidelines are available from P.O. Box 166, Nappanee IN 46550, or your pastor should have them on file in his office. All bulletin and "For the Record" submissions must be in our office by the first day of each month.

ball and bowling teams of the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., participated in the Mar. 23 Messiah College sports tournament. On Mar. 17, the congregation presented 42 grocery bags of food to MCC for the urban poor. • On Mar. 24 the **Cedar Heights** congregation, Mill Hall, Pa., baptized four persons and received seven members. The Easter musical was "The Wonder of It All."

On Mar. 17-20 the **Cumberland Valley** church, Dillsburg, Pa., invited Labib Mikhail to speak on "The Gulf War and End Times." The third Sunday night of each month has been set aside for a concert of prayer. • The musical "Tell Me a Story" was presented Mar. 17 by the junior church children of the **Dillsburg** congregation. • Si Lehman Jr. has accepted a new five-year term to pastor the **Fairview** congregation, Reesers Summit, Pa. A Mar. 2-3 missions conference featured Marshall and Eleanor Poe, Carl Shank, and Esther Spurrier. • On Mar. 20 Phil and Judy Keefer shared with the **Grantham**, Pa., congregation about their experience in the Templo/ Kinder project in Venezuela. • The **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa., held revival meetings Mar. 10-17 with Ricky Rose of Graham, N.C.

On Mar. 3 a special council meeting of the **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., congregation was called to

act on the board's recommendation to hire a part-time Children's Director. Fred Holland led spiritual life week meetings Mar. 17-21. • Bishop Hawbaker spoke on Mar. 17 to the **Messiah Village** congregation, Mechanicsburg. Terry Brensinger led Holy Week services Mar. 27, 28, 29, 31. • Bob Jones, soloist from Dagsboro, Del., gave a sacred concert during the first hour of the resurrection celebration of the **Redland Valley** church, York Haven, Pa. The Mar. 27 We Care meeting was on "Keys to a Transformed Self-image" with Charlene Ragland. • The **Wesley** church, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa., hosted a community Lenten service on Mar. 13. Mar. 24 concluded collections for the MCC Grocery Bag Project. • The group Focused was in concert recently at the **West Shore** church, Mechanicsburg. Four were baptized on Mar. 24.

For the Record

Births

Confer: Ethan Andrew, Feb. 1; Gregory and Lorretta (Weaver) Confer, Marsh Creek congregation, Pa.

Dahl: James Wendell, Feb. 26; Eldon and Leanne (Campbell) Dahl, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Davisson: Joshua Alan, Mar. 5; Alan and Shirley (Brillinger) Davisson, Oak Ridges congregation, Ont.

Dickel: David Isaiah IV, Mar. 7; David III and Paula (Crabb) Dickel, Conoy congregation, Pa.

Ducharme: Matthew Joseph, Dec. 26, 1990; Norman and Yvonne (Pothier) Ducharme, Kirkland Lake congregation, Ont.

Everhart: Dylan Wade, Jan. 9; Crist and Marianne Everhart, Canoe Creek congregation, Pa.

Givler: Derek Todd, Mar. 11; Christopher and Joyce (Lehman) Givler, New Light congregation, Md.

Graham: Brittany Ann, Mar. 1; James and Harleen (Williams) Graham, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

Hagey: Dayne Michael, Aug. 30, 1990; Michael and Denise Hagey, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

Hess: Brandon Lee, Mar. 15; Dean and Jean (Caufman) Hess, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

Huston: Norma Danielle, May 18, 1990; Dan and Alice (Farthing) Huston, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Kennedy: Julie Faye, Feb. 26; Ben and Jeanne (Farmer) Kennedy, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Killinger: Jacequeline Elaine, Mar. 16; John and Sherri Killinger, Fairland congregation, Pa.

Klink: Nathaniel Lee, Mar. 8; Paul L. and Kathleen (Clark) Klink, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

Lamey: Adam Keith, Mar. 28; Keith and Amber (Falls) Lamey, Cedar Heights congregation, Pa.

Landis: Luke Reed, Feb. 24; Ric and Debbie Landis, Carlisle congregation, Pa.

Lourden: Seth Andrew, Mar. 6; Scott and Camilla (Custer) Lourdon, Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa.

Martin: Preston Scott, Feb. 22; Dwight and Karen Martin, Fairland congregation, Pa.

McCleaf: Wesley Jordan, Mar. 14; Doug and Denise McCleaf, Cumberland Valley congregation, Pa.

McLean: Jennifer Lynne, Feb. 15; Bill and Carin McLean, Fairland congregation, Pa.

Negley: Daniel Israel, Mar. 4; Lowell and Deborah (Cornog) Negley, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

Neumann: Anna Elizabeth, Feb. 12; Karl and Kathy (Robinson) Neumann, Perkiomen Valley congregation, Pa.

Parks: Arika Anneliese, Dec. 27, 1990; Michael and Melissa (Engle) Parks, Seattle, Wa.

Parsons: Ronald, III, Feb. 3; Ron and Tammy Parsons, Hollowell congregation, Pa.

Peachey: Jenna Ellen, Mar. 10; John and Deb Peachey, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Raush: Emily Rebekah, Mar. 10; Alan and Martha (Herr) Raush, Manor congregation, Pa.

Schmidt: Mathew Tyler, Nov. 5, 1990; chosen son of Ken and Shirley (Roberts) Schmidt, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Shaffer: Corey Mitchell, Mar. 2; Marlin and Kandis (Withers) Shaffer, Mastersonville congregation, Pa.

Sider: Tyson Bradley, Mar. 4; Troy and Natalie (Burt) Sider, Port Colborne congregation, Ont.

Sims: Frances, Aug. 20, 1990; Troy and Brenda (Negley) Sims, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

Camp Freedom '91

Greetings from St. Petersburg, Florida, home of Camp Freedom. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty" (Zech. 4:6). The 1991 camp meeting was truly characterized by God's Spirit visiting and blessing his church.

The Spirit of God was upon the ministry of the Word. Our co-evangelists were Dr. Fred Holland and Rev. Herman Noll. Rev. Luke Keefer, Sr. served as our Bible teacher. Weekend speakers included Rev. Harold Schmul and Rev. Wilbur Benner. God used each of his servants to proclaim the Word with a particular emphasis on holiness of heart and life.

The Spirit of God was upon the music ministry. Don and Shirl Gessner served as song evangelists, along with their son Eric. Special features included music ministry from Hobe Sound Bible College and Penn View Bible Institute. There were numerous times when God

visited his people with a special shower of blessing as songs of praise, worship, and victory rang out.

The Spirit of God was evident on missions day as Bishop Louis Cober and Fred Holland presented the challenges of Brethren in Christ missions. Rev. Gerald Bustin represented the Evangelical Bible Mission. Of special interest was his recent visit to Russia and Bulgaria.

The Spirit of God was upon our worship services in a special way. There was a spirit of freedom, openness, and obedience to the calling of God. This was evident in the financial giving as well. We met our operational budget of \$17,000, plus an additional \$10,000 for capital expenditures.

For those of us who attended, we respond by saying, "Surely it was good for us to have been there." However, if you missed this past camp, now is the time to plan to be at next year's camp. Camp dates run from Jan. 22-Feb. 2, 1991. Evangelists include Simon Lehman, Jr. and Earl Newton. The David Fullers will serve as song evangelists. —*Jesse Bawel, Camp board secretary*■

Smith: Justin Matthew, Feb. 21; Jeff and Robyn (Flatt) Smith, Oak Ridges congregation, Ont.

Spoonhour: Aaron Ronald, Mar. 11; Alan and Marcia (Mellinger) Spoonhour, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

Stoops: Hannah Brynn, Feb. 10; Ray and Deborah (Baughner) Stoops, Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa.

Stover: Colten Lee, Feb. 15; Daren and Lisa (Corl) Stover, Marsh Creek congregation, Pa.

Vargeson: Adam Taylor, Mar. 15; Ann and Rodney Vargeson, Jemison Valley congregation, Pa.

Winger: Angela Grace, Mar. 14; Timothy and Susan (Mast) Winger, Fordwich congregation, Ont.

Wolgemuth: Elisha Joy, Mar. 2; Eric and Sue (Snyder) Wolgemuth, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Beachy-Herr: Suzanne Marie, daughter of Paul B. and Leola B. Herr, Mechanicsburg, Pa., and Marvin Dean, son of Joseph and Mary Beachy, Kalona, Iowa, Feb. 16, at the United Methodist Church, London, Ohio, with Rev. Walter Beachy and Rev. E. D. Brechbill officiating.

Crist-Haire: Sandy Jean, daughter of Ronald and Naomi Haire, Montoursville, Pa., and George Woodrow, son of John Crist, Florida, and Jane Trees, Williamsport, Md., April 7, at the Montoursville Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating.

Forrester-Alleman: Brenda Sue, daughter of Ray and Betty Alleman, Chambersburg, Pa., and John Eric, son of Clarence and Linda Forrester, Jr., Orrstown, Pa., Mar. 9, at Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert and Rev. Caroline Smith officiating.

Ginder-Tobias: Deborah Ann, daughter of Elmer Jr. and Mary Louise Tobias, Palmyra, Pa., and Samuel Clarence, son of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginder, Manheim, Pa., Mar. 9, at Palmyra Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Marlin Zook officiating.

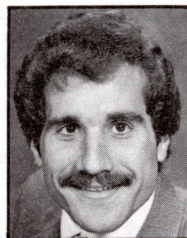
Ness-Bauman: Tina Louise, daughter of Mark and Charlotte Bauman, Lititz, Pa., and Duane, son of Jacob and Fern Ness, York, Pa., Jan. 19, at Speedwell Heights Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur Besecker officiating.

Ober-Noll: Lori Jeanine, daughter of John and Linda Noll, Mount Joy, Pa., and Terry Ray, Jr., son of Terry and Melissa Ober, Mount Joy, Mar. 23, at the groom's home, with Rev. David Sheaffer officiating.

Obituaries

Brubaker: Darrel J. Brubaker, born Dec. 1, 1957, in Upland, Calif., died Feb. 25. He is survived by his wife, Sheri; his parents, Merle and Ila; two sisters, Jean Stretton and Joy Derck; and a twin brother, David. A graduate of Messiah College (1980) and Eastern Baptist Seminary (1984), Darrel served as pastor of the Sandia Brethren in

Christ and Mennonite Church in Albuquerque, N.M., from 1984-1988, and was ordained to the ministry in both the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Churches. He also served the general church as a member of the Commission on Peace and Social Concerns, and then as a member of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns. Darrel and Sheri moved to Washington, D.C. in 1988 at the invitation of Myron Augsburg and Washington Community Fellowship. He was also employed by Evangelicals for Social Action, with Ronald J. Sider, executive director. In 1990 he was appointed campus pastor at Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary. Participants in the funeral service at Eastern Mennonite College included, in addition to Augsburg and Sider, EMC and Seminary President Joseph Lapp, Professor Lawrence Yoder, college senior Jeff Hoffman, Norman Kraus and Jean Peifer from Community Mennonite Church, Carolyn Heggen, and Paul Gingerich of Mennonite Board of Missions Overseas Committee. Interment was at Grantham Memorial Park, Pa., with Eber Dourte officiating.



Tribute

In 23 years of teaching, I think Darrel was the student that I became closest to—dear friend, special brother, and wonderful colleague. I remember him in lots and lots of ways: as a teenager along with Dave who used to babysit our two sons, as a young seminary student who lived in our home and was a wonderful friend of our two sons, and as my graduate assistant. He did one book with me and did a lot of writing on another.

Darrel is one of the best persons that I have ever known. He loved the Lord with all his heart. He obeyed the Lord with his heart and mind and soul. I watched him be a wonderful mentor for Arbutus's and my two teenage sons. I watched him struggle with the spiritual choices that we all make in life, the big choices and the smaller ones, and every time as he faced the issue—and he did it so openly, so open to the Spirit—every time I watched him make the right choice.

I've never seen him where he saw what the Lord wanted and turned away. And I know that if chemical imbalance had not overwhelmed him, he would never have consciously chosen to die the way he did.

I watched him demonstrate the incredible courage of daring to apply Matthew 18 in one of the toughest kinds of situations that any of us will face, and he did it so well in the combination of courage and gentleness and truthfulness—the kind of combination that comes from our Lord and that I would wish for every church leader.

If I were to ask the Lord for what I would most wish for my seminary teaching, and what I would most wish for the church, it would be for hundreds of young Christian leaders like Darrel.

I grieve for his loss, for all that I know he would have done for the kingdom, but finally I believe that even though history is important, and what we do here is incredibly important—it is not an illusion—that finally life is a preparation for living forever with the Lord. And I know that is where Darrel is, at peace with our Lord.

Ronald J. Sider

Buckwalter: Beulah Kern Buckwalter, 80, born in Franklin County, Pa., died Feb. 22. Her death preceded that of her husband by 11 days (see

following). Surviving are 2 stepsons, Paul and Ray; 3 stepdaughters, Arlene Van Riper, Esther Wingert, and Beulah Oakes; 3 brothers, Norman Asper, Ellis Asper, and Irvin Asper; a sister, Lula Couch; 23 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren; a great-great-grandson; and several nieces and nephews. She was a member of the Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church and the Wyalusing Senior Citizens. The funeral was held at the Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Joel Histand and Rev. Glen W. Dalton officiating. Interment was in the Air Hill cemetery.

Buckwalter: Harvey T. Buckwalter, 90, son of David H. and Rhoda (Tyson) Buckwalter, died Mar. 9. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Naomi (Lehman) in 1980, and 11 days earlier by his second wife, Beulah (Kern). Surviving are 2 sons, Paul and Ray; 3 daughters, Arlene Van Riper, Esther Wingert, and Beulah Oakes; 23 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren; a great-great-grandson; 3 brothers, Wilmer, Earl, and Jesse; and 2 sisters, Sara Lehman, and Mildred Mann. He was a self-employed farmer and a dealer with Minneapolis Moline Farm Machinery in the Pottstown, Pa., area. For the past 28 years, he lived in the Laceyville-Stevensville area. He was a member of the Stowe congregation and the Wyalusing Senior Citizens. The funeral was held at the Perkiomen Valley Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Joel Histand, Rev. Richard Isminger, Rev. Jacob Bowers, and Rev. Irvin Tyson officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Carver: Ross Carver, born July 14, 1919, son of Michael Carver and Ethel Bailey, died Feb. 16. Preceding him in death were his brother, John; and a granddaughter, Shelly Carver. Surviving are his wife, Ann; three sons, Michael, Robert, and Allan; two daughters, Joan and Sharon; and his mother. He was a member of the Port Colborne congregation, Ont., where the funeral was held with Rev. Brian R. Lofthouse officiating. Interment was in Pleasantview Memorial Gardens, Pelham.

Dohner: Elam Orville Dohner, born Feb. 18, 1910, son of Moses L. and Emma Ulery Dohner, died Mar. 2. Surviving are his wife Helen (Markley); two brothers, Ernest and Dale; and a sister, Dortha Dohner. Elam was a retired pastor, church planter, missionary, and member of the DeRossett congregation, Tenn. Funeral services were held at the Thurman Funeral Home, Sparta, with Rev. Rodger McCann, and Rev. Jim Scott officiating. Services were also held at Ashland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Dale Engle officiating. Interment was in Chestnut Grove Cemetery, Ashland.

Tribute

Our beloved brother in the Lord has completed the race, has finished the course, and has now been called into the presence of Jesus Christ, his Savior and Lord. Brother Dohner, married March 15, 1933, to his wife Helen, was elected to the ministry by the brothers and sisters of the Chestnut Grove Brethren in Christ Church, Ashland, Ohio. He was ordained thereafter by his father, Bishop Moses Dohner, and continued to assist in the ministry there until 1938, when the couple moved to southern California. There they participated in church planting and development in both Alta Loma and Sunnymead.

In 1949 the Dohners responded to a call from the Home Mission Board to serve as the superintendent couple for the churches in Adair County, Kentucky. Then in 1954 they accepted the challenge to arrange for evangelistic tent services in Tennessee. From these contacts emerged the

"Church was for . . . and success was . . ."

by Bob Leadley

The concept of stewardship is one which I had a great deal of difficulty accepting. I grew up in a lower middle class home and accepted the philosophy of my parents regarding church and finances. Church was for women, and success was represented by material possessions. When I first was presented with the concept of tithing I was not impressed to say the least.

When Kathy and I were married, our goal was to be financially secure. In the early years, while completing my education, our incomes were low but we got by. The year I received my designation as a Chartered Accountant (C.P.A. in the U.S.A.) our financial situation improved dramatically. I was a very successful partner in a national accounting firm.

Whatever we wanted we purchased. We lived in an exclusive neighborhood, belonged to the right clubs, and drove B.M.W.'s, Lincolns and sport cars. According to my philosophy we were successful and we were satisfied.

After the birth of our first daughter, Jessica, we decided to adopt children. We enjoyed being parents and in our youthful naivete we wanted to give underprivileged children a home. We adopted five children in less than a year. While we were not interested in church, we decided that the kids should decide for themselves. Kathy and I decided we could suffer through one hour a week for their sakes. In the process of "suffering through," we both became Christians.

I readily accepted Jesus as my Savior. However, making him Lord, as it turned out, was going to be a six-year process. We were proud of the fact that we were successful and proud that we had done it on our own. I came to the conclusion that I could do just about anything I put my mind to.

I decided, against Kathy's advice, to invest a large sum of money in a high return/high risk venture. In the initial stages the business did well and so my partners and I invested more money. Shortly after, the situation went from bad to worse. When all was said and

done I had lost all our savings, and incurred an enormous debt. All we had left was our house and that was tenuous. Not a good situation for a "hot shot" accountant.

We decided that our lifestyle had to change radically. We went on a cash only system, purchasing only essentials.

We went from several expensive cars to one five-year-old rusted out Ford Pinto. Eight of us drove to church each Sunday in that car, three in the front and five in the back. Members of the congregation would wait outside the church each week just to see us get out of the car.

One of the many lessons I learned was that you can change your lifestyle and live within your means if you choose to. The most important lesson was that I was not as sharp as I thought I was and that if I was going to be a Christian, I had to start taking my faith seriously. This whole experience was one that I would not choose to repeat; it is also one I would not want to have missed.

I began to put my life in order based on biblical principles. During the period over which we paid off the debts, we gave a minimum of 10 percent of our gross income to our local church.

The Lord has chosen to bless Kathy and me again. Once more we are able to have whatever we choose. The difference now is that the desire of our hearts is to honor the Lord, as he enables us, and to be faithful servants of that which he has given to us.

We are excited about the opportunity God has provided for us to manage his resources. We are both serving the Lord in Christian ministry and are able to do so without financial compensation. Our interest is not so much what we possess or what we can accumulate, but rather what we can give to honor God.

My philosophy of church and success has changed. Church is for winners and success is pleasing God. ■

Bob Leadley is Director of Stewardship of the Canadian Conference. This is the seventh in a series of stewardship testimonies.

Cooperative Ministries

Receipts—Year to Date
January 1 - March 31, 1991

	1991	1990
Proportionate and Designated	501,836	553,661
Congregational	468,545	508,995
Individual	33,291	44,666
Direct Giving	67,340	65,513
Congregational	36,005	37,086
Individual	31,335	28,427
Total to Date	569,176	619,174
Total Budget	3,835,885	3,749,096
% Received to Date	14.8%	16.5%

DeRossett and Rolling Acres congregations. During ministry in Kentucky, a church was planted in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Dohners served the Christian Union congregation, Garrett, Ind., from 1957 to 1963, then as church planting pastor from 1963 through 1977 in Phoneton, Ohio. Always ready for a new challenge, Brother and Sister Dohner gave leadership to a new church planting in Clearwater, Fla., from 1977 to 1980. Then in 1980 the Dohners returned to Tennessee. During the past decade, with church membership at DeRossett, they had a broad and varied ministry in central Tennessee.

Brother Dohner loved people, the Word of God, the Brethren in Christ Church, and he loved his Lord supremely. He enjoyed life and related easily to others in a fun-loving, good-natured way. He was firm about the truth, but deliberately tolerant of those who might not fully agree with all of his spiritual understandings. While Brother and Sister Dohner did not parent any biological children, they have many spiritual children and have endeared themselves to the extended family of the brotherhood.

Brother Dohner's character can be described as genuine, dedicated and dependable. This soldier of Christ has completed his assignment. He has been called home in victory to receive his crown and to hear the welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." He has received the inheritance provided for him by a loving heavenly Father. All praise be to the Lord, our God!

Louis O. Cober, Bishop
Pacific and Southeast Conferences

Engle: Anna R. Engle, born Jan. 29, 1896, in Rapho Township, Lancaster County, Pa., the daughter of Eli M. and Barbara Kline (Ostot) Engle, died Mar. 10, 1991. Surviving are several nieces and nephews. An alumnus of Messiah College, she graduated with a B.A. degree from Elizabethtown College, and later studied in Africa and at Columbia University in New York. A member of the Messiah College faculty in the 1920s and from 1956 to 1962, she spent 25 years as a missionary for the Brethren in Christ Church in Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe), as well as 20 years with The Evangelical Alliance Mission in Pretoria, South Africa. She was a member of both the Grantham and Messiah Village congregations. The funeral service was held at the Messiah Village Chapel with Rev. J. Robert Lehman and Rev. David E. Climenhaga officiating. Interment was in Cross Roads Cemetery, Mount Joy, Pa.

Tribute

As one thinks of the homegoing of Sister Anna R. Engle, one is reminded of a proverbial statement, "That person cast a long shadow." How true of the missionary career of Anna Engle. We will continue to live under the shadow of her long and consecrated life for the Lord Jesus Christ and the cause of missions. She can be called the intrepid worker who never stopped until the Lord said, "It is enough, come up higher." From the commencement of her missionary service in June 1926 to March 1991, her life has in truth been a two thirds of a century missionary career.

In her tours of missionary activity, Anna Engle served with Brethren in Christ World Missions for twenty-five years in the countries of Southern and Northern Rhodesia (today known as Zimbabwe and Zambia). She had assignments which took her to the main mission stations at Mtshabezi, Sika-longo, Macha and Wanezi.

She is remembered in various ways:

—by current missionary retirees as one who

taught them when they were missionary children. This was her first missionary assignment.

—by me when she was the first teacher at Wanezi Bible School (now the Ekuphileni Bible Institute) which we founded together in the late forties.

—for her excellent linguistic skills in both Ndebele or Zulu and Tonga as she labored in Zimbabwe and Zambia.

—for her deep and abiding interest in the development of the churches and church leadership in outstation areas.

Following a tour of teaching at Messiah College in the fifties and early sixties, Anna Engle returned in 1962 to the Republic of South Africa for further missionary service. Since the Brethren in Christ did not have a mission program in South Africa at that time, she was able to serve under the aegis of the Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM). Here she was involved in writing commentaries and other materials in Zulu and in tutorial work. Even in this she represented in a sense an extension arm of the Brethren in Christ brotherhood, for she kept in continuing contact with the Brethren in Christ Church in South Central Africa.

When it came to the so-called retirement years, her missionary calling and abilities kept her at the task of continuing to produce Christian literature and commentaries in Zulu right up until the very end. Thus the "shadow" goes on.

The Brethren in Christ Church at home and in Southern Africa, the Board for World Missions, and the wider evangelical community can never thank Sister Anna R. Engle enough for her life, service, and ministry. She has finished the course, she has run the race, now for her crown of life. So may we all be faithful in our callings.

Arthur M. Climenhaga
Acting Executive Director
Brethren in Christ World Missions

Fisher: Dorothy Mildred, born May 17, 1913, died Mar. 8. Surviving are her husband, Clarence R.; a brother, Robert A. Aument; and several nieces and nephews. She was a retired secretary for the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, and a member of the Messiah Village congregation. The funeral was held at the Messiah Village Chapel with Rev. J. Robert Lehman officiating. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Gardens, Harrisburg, Pa.

Hogue: Clifford V. Hogue, born June 8, 1921, son of Stewart Thomas and Emma Minerva (Kirkland) Hogue, died Feb. 14. Preceding him in death was his wife, M. Edna (Brazenski). Surviving are two daughters, Darlene Fouse, and Janice Cook; three sons, Clifford DeWayne, Delmis V., and Virgil A. He was a member of the Antrim congregation where he was a former Sunday school teacher. For a number of years he managed and sang for the Christ Ambassadors Quartet. He also sang on the radio and in numerous churches. He was a volunteer for Meals on Wheels and at the Chambersburg Hospital. He was owner and operator of C. V. Hogue Barber Shop in Chambersburg. The funeral was held at the Antrim church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner and Rev. Joe Baer officiating. Interment was in Parklawns Memorial Gardens.

Kinnaird: James (Burt) Kinnaird, born Apr. 11, 1913, son of Anson and Mary (Mandley) Kinnaird, died Feb. 21. Surviving are his wife, Nellie; four sons, Clyde, Roy, Nelson, and Bruce; eight grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. He attended the Bertie congregation for 12 years, and was a member for over two years. The funeral was held at the Williams Funeral Home with Rev. Don

Middlemiss officiating assisted by Albert Scholtens and Mark Thornton. Interment was in Doan's Ridge Cemetery, Welland.

Lehman: Israel F. Lehman, born Feb. 16, 1902, son of Daniel S. and Ida (Fausnacht) Lehman, died Feb. 10, 1990. Surviving are his wife, Annie; two brothers, Jonas and Able; two daughters, Mae Negley and Margaret Landis; and four sons, Clyde, Walter, Glen, and Wes. The Lehmans had celebrated their 63rd anniversary in April 1989. Israel was a member of the Silverdale congregation, Pa., where the funeral was held with Rev. Robert Zimmerman officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Myers: Mary E. Myers, born June 29, 1898, daughter of Rev. John and Mary Dick, died Mar. 1. Preceding her in death was her husband, Walter N. Myers. Surviving are a daughter, Ruth Dourte; 3 sons, W. Seibert, Ralph L., and Amos D.; 15 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; 3 great-great-grandchildren; a sister, Sarah Glosser; and a brother, Paul Dick. She graduated from Carlisle General Hospital as a registered nurse and served two years in India as a missionary nurse. She was a member of the Hollowell congregation, Pa., where the funeral service was held with Rev. Robert Lehman and Rev. Robert Byers officiating. Interment was in the Montgomery church cemetery.

Ott: Alice G. Ott, born Nov. 14, 1904, daughter of Levi Wilson and Irene (Glass) Kauffman, died Mar. 2. Preceding her in death were her husband, G. Orville Ott; and a sister, Ella Mae Butler. Surviving are 5 children, Evelyn Helsel; Irene Beach; Albert L., Harry, and Charles; 21 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and 3 great-great-grandchildren. She was a member of the Woodbury congregation. The funeral was held at the S. Gerald Weaver Funeral Home with Rev. Earl E. Herr officiating. Interment was in Dry Hill Cemetery.

Poe: Donald M. "Tim" Poe, born July 7, 1922, son of Roy C. and Ruth Brechbill Poe, died Mar. 23. He was preceded in death by two brothers and one sister. Surviving are his wife, Julia (Labesky); a daughter, Sonya Williamson; two sons, Edgar Allan and Tim; five grandchildren; five sisters: Mildred Starr, Eleze McKenzie, Dorothy Lawyer, Ruth Small, and Isabel Wenger; and three brothers: Robert M., R. Charles, and Theodore V. Donald was a member of the Chambersburg, Pa., congregation where he was a former deacon, Sunday school treasurer, and church board member for many years. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II, and for more than 35 years a Red Cross blood donor. He was retired from Letterkenny Army Depot. The funeral service was at the church with Rev. Douglas Kelchner officiating. Interment was in Air Hill Cemetery.

Shambaugh: Thelma E. Shambaugh, born Mar. 12, 1915, died Jan. 28. Surviving are her husband, Hugh J. Shambaugh; two sons, John and James; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; three brothers; and a sister. She and her husband faithfully attended and supported the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church since its beginning in 1970. The funeral was at the church with Rev. John A. Fries and James Spurrier officiating. Interment was in Dillsburg Cemetery.

Wilkins: Vera E. Wilkins, born May 23, 1903, in Dubois, Pa., died Mar. 16. Surviving are her husband, Dewey; and four sons, Alfred, Bruce, Arlyn, and Archie. The funeral service was held at the Dalla Valley Funeral Home, Everett, Pa., with Rev. Ralph Palmer and Rev. Lorne G. Lichty officiating. Interment was in Rock Hill Cemetery.

Atlantic Congregational Life Festival

On Sunday afternoon, Feb. 17, 352 persons gathered at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church for the 4th Annual Atlantic Conference Congregational Life Festival. The emphasis was "Atlantic Youth: Serving, Caring, Growing." The service moderated by Daniel Houck, Associate for Field Ministries of Atlantic Conference, featured two hours of singing, testimonies, special music and times of recognition for the youth and youth workers of the conference.

Special music was provided by Anthony Hoke, Amy Keefer, Sonia Myer, Melanie Starr and Charles Starr. The Fairland Youth Choir, under the direction of Deb Mengel, sang three contemporary Christian arrangements. Chris Albright, former pastor at Kenbrook Bible Camp and current pastor of Christian education at the New Guilford church (Allegheny Conference) led the group in times of meaningful worship.

Matt Knepper and Jenny Ernst from the Lancaster congregation shared about their youth group's service with M.C.C.'s SWAP program, while Chad Frey and Jolene Garman shared about Manor's summer missions trip to the island of St. Croix.

Special recognition was given to all those who work with youth in the local congregation. To say thank you, the Board for Congregational Life gave each youth worker a mug filled with Hershey's chocolates. BCL chairperson Barb Hess expressed the conference's appreciation for the countless hours of hard work invested by the youth leaders in the lives of the Atlantic Conference youth.

Youth from the Summit View church served as ushers and greeters for the meeting. Former Kenbrook Bible Camp summer staff presented a portion of a drama they used weekly last summer

called, "A Jesus Walk." The players acted out scenes from the life of Christ such as the healing of the blind beggar, the parable of the prodigal son, and Jesus' teaching of the "Lord's Prayer." Duane Heisey, former assistant director, played the part of Jesus. Others in the cast included: Brenda Horst, Amy Garmen, Deb Kreider, Dawn Geib, Shelva Hess, John Schalk, Keith Pertusio, Anthony Heisey, and Daniel Houck.

The festival climaxed with the viewing of a multi-projector slide/tape presentation entitled "Atlantic Youth: Serving, Caring, Growing." The show was put together using slides donated by Atlantic Conference churches, showing their youth in action.

The Manor kitchen committee served a warm fellowship luncheon to the attendees following the service. The Board for Congregational Life is planning their 5th Festival for the third Sunday of next February.—reported by Dan Houck ■

Messiah College News

College hosts Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament

While Messiah students were on Spring Break, March 23-April 1, the 37th annual Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament for the Allegheny, Atlantic and Susquehanna conferences took over the Messiah campus. Although not everyone came away with a trophy, a good time was had by all, contestants and spectators alike. Below are some of the winners.

Men's Basketball	Champion	Runner-Up
"A" League	Mechanicsburg I	Mechanicsburg II
"B" League	Cedar Grove	Antrim III
"C" League	Elizabethtown	Mechanicsburg
Women's Volleyball		
"A" League	Manor I	Antrim I
"B" League	Five Forks	Cross Roads
Table Tennis	Manor I	Mechanicsburg I
Bowling	New Guilford	Green Spring

Multi-cultural conference held

"Let the Whole World Sing" was the theme for the fourth annual National Christian Multi-Cultural Student Leadership Conference held at Messiah College Thursday, April 18, through Sunday, April 21.

The conference assembled American ethnic minority and international student leaders from across the country, as well

as advisors, college residence hall directors, and other campus support personnel. Through a variety of lectures, workshops and sharing sessions, the participants celebrated their multi-cultural heritage, but also learned how to work together to achieve a better understanding of the world and each other.

Keynote speaker this year was Barbara Williams-Skinner, currently Executive Vice-President of Tom Skinner Associates, leadership development organization headquartered in New York City for the past 20 years. It is committed to raising up a new generation of African American leaders who are both technically and morally excellent.

Messiah listed on "character-building" honor roll

For the second year in a row, Messiah College has been selected to appear on the John Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges for 1991. The Honor Roll is an annual listing of those schools which "best exemplify campuses that encourage the development of strong moral character among students."

Messiah is one of 108 on this year's Honor Roll. The Honor Roll was compiled by polling college and university presidents and directors of development of all four-year, accredited institutions of higher education across the country.

The Honor Roll is sponsored by John Marks Templeton and the John Templeton Foundation. It is their hope that conferring this honor might be of help to future college students and their parents, as well as those whose generosity supports higher education.

The John Templeton Foundation has commissioned Marketing Research Institute (MRI) to conduct the annual poll and publicize results. In addition to press releases, MRI is also compiling a brochure of the 1991 Honor Roll which will include a brief overview of those schools included. The brochure is made available to schools on the Honor Roll for use with prospective students. ■

World Fellowship Sunday—May 19

Pentecost inaugurated a new age, an age of peace lived in the people of God and offered to all nations. So affirm Raul Garcia (Argentina) and Larry Miller (France) in calling global Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren, and Brethren in Christ to celebrate World Fellowship Sunday, May 19, 1991.

On behalf of the Mennonite World Conference, its president (Garcia) and executive secretary (Miller) observe, "Neither ethnic identity nor language limitation can stop the renewal of all things begun in the power of the Spirit. No local congregation or national church alone can contain the new creation. Only as parts of the multi-cultural,

multi-lingual, universal body of Christ can they provide a foretaste of the world transformed."

Congregations are urged to make Pentecost worship a time for considering the implications of belonging to an interdependent world family. An international litany of praise, confession and commitment, based on the faith statement used at the closing worship of Assembly 12 in Winnipeg the last Sunday of July 1990, has been sent to congregations through respective conference offices. (Copies may also be requested from MWC, Box 88836, Carol Stream, IL 60188-0836.)

World Fellowship Sunday offerings

are welcome on behalf of Mennonite World Conference, connector of member churches around the world. At the end of January 1991, the Assembly 12 deficit was US \$90,000 (Can \$105,000).

Garcia and Miller point out that MWC work continues to evolve in response to needs expressed by its worldwide constituency. In making that response MWC seeks to be a

**connector* of member churches around the world;

**convener* of regional and international church to church conversations on issues critical for the survival, vitality and mission of member churches;

**communicator* of biblical vision in Anabaptist perspective within both the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ family and the larger Christian church. ■

The Way of Peace a column for Christian peacemakers

Your World Hunger Funds at work

In 1990, Brethren in Christ individuals and congregations contributed about \$60,000 to the World Hunger Fund, administered by the Board for Brotherhood Concerns. Below are highlights of three of the projects that were funded by your generous contributions.

1. *South Side Center, Philadelphia:* Randy Jones, Executive Director of the South Side Center, writes: "We are indeed grateful to the Brethren in Christ for their support of our ministry. . . . Our Outreach Food Bank Center services about 40-50 families a week, or approximately 200-250 people weekly. It is highly important that our food bank continue. Tioga is one of the most hopeless and blighted areas in Philadelphia. Its streets are often filled with violence, crime and now an ever-expanding drug problem. In addition . . . the city of Philadelphia is on the verge of bankruptcy. . . . Your donation and support is vital for [the continuance of the Food Bank]. We can never predict what will come in by way of donations. Your monthly allocation, therefore, gives us a measure of stability."

In 1991, the World Hunger Fund continues to support the food bank ministry of the South Side Church.

2. *Venezuela:* Alvin and Thata Book, Brethren in Christ missionaries in Venezuela, write: "We appreciate the gift of \$500 which was sent to us from the World Hunger Fund. In a time when it seems so many of our church families have needs, some of them with one crisis after another, it has been very helpful to us to have access to these funds for lending a helping hand." They go on to report that the money was used for cancelling some accumulated debts, household repairs for a needy widow, school fees for the widow's children, car repairs for a single mother, replacement of stolen clothes, and food for needy families.

3. *Zimbabwe:* Late in 1990, the World Hunger Fund responded to a call for money to help buy seeds and administer feeding programs in rural areas of Zimbabwe. In 1991, World Hunger Funds will be used to help improve the water system at Phumula Hospital, in recognition of the fact that access to potable water is crucial in preventing hunger and disease.

Because the World Hunger Fund is a non-budget program, it depends on designated gifts. Contributions may be sent to the Brethren in Christ Stewardship Office and designated for the World

Hunger Fund. Pastors are encouraged to set one Sunday a month for a WHF offering, and to insert regular announcements about the WHF in your bulletins. For more information about the World Hunger Fund, including a list of 1991 projects, contact the Board for Brotherhood Concerns, P.O. Box 246, Mount Joy, PA 17552; (717) 653-8251. ■

The Way of Peace column is a project of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns.

Tenth Annual Heritage Service

Historic Ringgold Meeting House

**Ringgold, Maryland
Sunday, June 2, 1991
3:00 p.m.**

Don Shafer will preach the sermon, with David Brubaker leading the singing.

Crashed course in Christian nonviolence

by John K. Stoner

The church is engaged in a tremendous struggle for the hearts and minds of its people in the matter of war and peace.

At the beginning of the discussion, the voice for war outweighs the voice for nonviolence like a stone over a feather.

"What would you do about Saddam Hussein?" someone asks. The questioner wants an answer in three sentences. Or, if they happen to be usually patient and interested, they will listen for five minutes. At the end of that time, if they aren't convinced, it's back to tanks and bombs.

What is happening here?

Two commanders in chief are issuing their marching orders. One, named The President, says, "Overcome your enemies with violent force. Kill for your country if you can, die for it if you must." The other, named Jesus, says, "Love your enemies. Overcome evil with good. Pour out your life for your Savior."

In the noise of wartime, the command of Jesus to "love your enemies" sounds like a whisper in a tornado. The Church, body of Christ in the world, army of the Prince of Peace, is not convincing its members that the voice of Jesus is authoritative for them. Its members, just like their neighbors, have advocated war against Saddam. Neither their words nor deeds communicate love for their enemies.

Is this surprising? Perhaps not. The hearts and minds of people are teachable and capable of changing, but not easily. Consider the evidence: The Commander in Chief has done his homework, invested in his cause and trained his populace. The Church of Jesus Christ, on the other hand, has ignored its book, squandered its wealth and pampered its people. Against the President's towering enterprise of education and preparation for war the Church

brings a pamphlet or two, maybe a book and a one-hour Sunday school class.

The influences which condition Americans to believe in the redemptive power of violence are numerous. Their cumulative impact is enormously effective. Television teaches children that life is cheap. Elementary and high schools teach that wars determine the course of history and purchase the benefits of democracy. Colleges reinforce these ideas and open their arms to military scholarships and ROTC programs. Television, newspapers and magazines huckster enemy images of nations which pose a threat to American political or economic power.

Hundreds of thousands of veterans who traveled to foreign countries to kill people spend the rest of their lives justifying their actions to themselves and others, permeating society with the ideology of war. In an annual ritual of obeisance to the god of war, the entire population on April 15 contributes over 50 percent of its income tax toward a violent, military response to evil. The hundreds of billions of dollars thus contributed pay for the recruitment of millions of specialists in warfare. These recruits devote years of their lives to training which reinforces and revises their worldview into full sympathy with the military ideology. The taxes also provide the livelihood of millions of scientists and production workers who invent and produce the demonic technology of war, from anti-personnel cluster bombs to the weapons of nuclear nightmare. Christian preachers and military chaplains permeate all of the institutions just mentioned, lending the appearance of blessing from Jesus Christ to the ideology of war.

And what does the peace church offer its members over against this colossus of indoctrination? Pastors debate within themselves, and maybe with others, whether they should devote a whole sermon to peace. Sunday school teachers consider using one class period to discuss nonresistance, that quaint doctrine of the Mennonites and Quakers. Youth advisors give an hour for the young people to voice their opinions about the war.

Nuclear physics is not learned from an evening's lecture, a machinist is not

trained in a day, and the human heart does not accept and understand Christ's way of nonviolence after one or two group discussions. The church's nonviolent response to evil is unbelievably small. Simple honesty demands that we name it a crashed course in Christian nonviolence. It never got off the ground. Dead on arrival.

The starting point for any congregation looking for an alternative to war against any despot is to acknowledge the dimensions of the task. Comparable projects would be a new building program, doubling the church's income in a year, or convincing the teenagers to sit in the front pew. But any of these would be easier than teaching Christians to follow Christ in his lifestyle of love.

Jesus' commission to his followers, "love your enemies," is a call to unpopularity, sacrifice and persecution. These are not commitments which people make lightly or easily. They require the kind of struggle, commitment, agony and testing which Jesus went through in a 40-day fast, in painful confrontation with honored religious leaders, and in Gethsemane prayer. We will not follow Jesus to the place of self-sacrificing confrontation with oppressive dictators if we have not invested our time, energy and money in costly preparation.

The educational materials are available. There are answers to erroneous dispensationalist interpretations of prophecy, misleading theologies of church and state, and narrow, limited descriptions of the salvation and kingdom which Jesus brought, but these do not enter the soul through a McDonald's milkshake straw. They must be sought out from experienced teachers and practitioners. They can be absorbed only through sustained effort and dedicated activity. The task is possible, but we should not underestimate its difficulty. It is time to end self-deception and our feeble efforts to "dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious, saying 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace" (Jer. 6). There is another way, but it is not easy.

John K. Stoner is Interim Secretary of the MCC Overseas Peace Office. He is a member of the Lancaster Brethren in Christ congregation.

Evangelical Visitor

The all-or-nothing syndrome

"Nobody ever listens to me!" "You always come home late." "You're never at home anymore." "Why don't you ever clean your room?" Those familiar exclamations, uttered in the heat of anger, have at least one thing in common: they're "all-or-nothing" statements. They express how we feel, but they're generally not literally true, and they inevitably elicit negative responses from their recipients.

All-or-nothing thinking is dualistic, putting ideas and persons in either-or, black-and-white categories. One idea must be denied in order for its opposite to be true. Either I do something completely successfully, or I'm a failure. (If there's one little mistake in something I write, then the whole article is useless, worthless.) Either I'm a good parent or

I'm a bad parent. If I can't do everything I want to do, then I don't want to do anything. I must either be totally passive, accepting whatever abuse someone dishes out, or I must be willing to defend myself and those I love in any way possible, including lethal violence.

Stated so starkly, all-or-nothing thinking seems ludicrous, and we wonder why we fall prey to it so easily. But it runs rampant. I hear and see it expressed in my home (I even do it), at church meetings, in denominational publications, by church leaders, by local, national and international leaders.

One reason all-or-nothing, black-and-white thinking happens so easily is that there is something satisfying about it. We yearn for simplicity; we want easy answers and simple solutions to the many problems that confront us. Thinking of issues in terms of black and white eliminates the need to think through complexities. We know when we're right; there's no middle ground.

But life is not like that all the time.

While there may be some things about which we can be certain and hence paint in black-and-white terms, most of the time issues are complex, and there are many shades of gray. Instead of thinking in all-or-nothing or either-or terms, it's usually more helpful to think of "both-and." I'm not a winner or a loser; I win some *and* I lose some. If I fail once as a parent, I haven't failed completely; chances are there's something else I've done right. When someone I respect does something wrong, it doesn't mean she's a bad person. If one idea is discarded as wrong, the opposite is not necessarily right; there may be a dozen alternate ideas somewhere in between.

Two book titles express some of this middle ground. The late child psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim published *A Good Enough Parent* a few years ago. Christian psychologist Lewis Smedes recently published *A Pretty Good Person*. To our way of thinking, schooled in perfectionism as many of us are, those

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- With rebellion being found in the manse, the mansion or the matchbox of homes, are we kidding ourselves to think that things can be different in the church?

- With our leaders/pastors being human, aren't they susceptible to "secret ambition" and thus suspect?

- Under whose authority do our leaders fall?

- Does our Anabaptist emphasis on community hinder a submissive response to individual authority?

- Has our Anabaptist strength, an emphasis on community, become a weakness because of its extreme form of not giving trust to one or a few?

Certainly, this is not an exhaustive list. However, these are questions we all must ask of ourselves as leaders under the authority of God and his church and as followers under the authority of leaders established by God.

As a parent of three boys, two of
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whom are school age, it gives me a great deal of pleasure at this point in their lives to review each one's report card and see high marks on the conduct report in areas of "responding well to authority." Lest you think these are compliant children, let me assure you otherwise. I realize that it's still early in their life, but such a report moves me to ask of myself—How am I continuing to model appropriate responses to authority as their father? If I pray, "Lord, lead me," how am I responding to his leadership? How am I responding to the leadership he's placed over me—my pastor, my board chairman, denominational leadership, the Board of Administration, the General Conference? I pray that my response would not be anything close to Saul's, a leader under God's authority. I pray that the response of God's people to leadership—both locally and denominationally—would not resemble any such characteristics of rebellion as well.

From 1 Samuel 15, we discover the characteristics of Saul's rebellious attitude:

1. Stubbornness (v. 1-9)—This was

Saul's desire to do things his way instead of God's; Saul did not "utterly destroy all."

2. Rationalization (v. 12, 13)—By definition, to rationalize is "to find plausible but untrue reasons for conduct."

3. Defensiveness (v. 14, 15)—Saul's rationalization is confronted with the truth and he hustles to defend himself.

4. Resistance to Accountability (v. 16-23)—Saul continues to duck Samuel's words even when wrong has been committed, and thus is rejected as king.

A sobering thought for children, teens, spouses, adults, leaders and followers is in the first part of verse 23: "Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as bad as worshipping idols" (Living Bible).

Lord, grant me a creative and critical mind, a spontaneous and sensitive spirit and a surrendered and submissive will. May I do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but instead consider others better than myself. May I have the attitude of Christ who made himself nothing; humbled himself and became obedient to death. Amen. ■

titles may suggest mediocrity rather than excellence. But they're also a great relief. We don't have to be perfect; we can be satisfied with being "good enough" or "pretty good."

This both-and stuff makes good psychological sense, I think, but is it also biblical? Two examples come to mind, and there are probably more. Jesus said, "Do not resist evil; when someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other cheek." Some people interpret that in an all-or-nothing way, assuming that you should never resist when someone wrongs you. But Jesus himself, when he was struck at one point during his trial, verbally challenged the attack rather than submissively turning the other cheek

(John 18:22-23). Jesus also condemned adultery (defining it even more strictly than before), yet he refused to condemn the woman caught in adultery.

Similarly, while Peter and Paul both commanded submission to the governing authorities, neither of them unthinkingly submitted when a higher law was at stake. Jesus, Peter and Paul all established principles which ought generally to be followed, but their behavior suggests more of a both-and approach which recognizes that other principles (e.g., compassion, integrity, justice) also must be considered.

As an all-or-nothing, either-or person by nature, I work hard at avoiding words like "never" and "always," and at

searching for alternatives to the extreme responses to which my mind and emotions naturally gravitate. As I learn to moderate my own all-or-nothing thinking, I'm learning to spot it in others. I've also noticed that I am more likely to be creative when I make a conscious effort to think in terms of many options and choices rather than just this one or that one. I don't believe that Jesus in his relationships with people models narrow, rigid, perfectionistic thinking; rather, I believe he wants and expects us to become whole persons, able to embrace and sort out all of life and its complexity.

Phoebe

Onesimus

Dear Paul,

Easter has sprouted once again here. Our congregation has been immersed in the celebrations of Christ's death and resurrection. (I realize you will not receive this until nearer Pentecost than Easter—such is mail service in the Roman empire.)

This may sound terrible to you, but the Easter religious observances have often created problems for me. I try to picture myself in the shoes (or sandals) of Jesus' followers. I do my best to imagine their feelings, sense their grief, feel their fears, identify with their questions and confusion.

I read those very familiar, yet still fascinating, stories of last supper, betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. I ponder on angels and empty tomb and disbelieving disciples.

And I still have often found myself wondering: what in the world does all this have to do with me?

For the early Christians it was different. They were there. They had been intimately involved with Jesus. They were traumatized by his vicious death and transformed by his miraculous rebirth. Fearful wimps became fearless world-beaters. From that time they lived (and sometimes died) with incredible purpose and power.

You, too, Paul, experienced a belated—but just as radical—change. Knocked into the dust. Blinded by heavenly flash. Addressed by the very voice of Christ. Saul became Paul. Chief persecutor turned into number one apologist. It's a

plot with television mini-series written all over it (but of course you've never heard of television, have you? Lucky guy!).

Then again, I've never heard the voice of God. Never witnessed a risen corpse. Never seen a blinding heavenly light. Never been crowned with tongues of visible fire.

So I can't help wondering sometimes when I gather with other believers on Easter or other Lord's days, whether we're just playing a game. Where's the evidence in us that Jesus has risen? We still seem like basically the same old bunch. We're not turning the world upside down. Perhaps we're fooling ourselves.

Certainly that's a possible explanation (and all too prevalent reality) in a culture that pays lip service to spiritual values while worshiping the gods of ego, pleasure, and materialism. Always lurking is the temptation to adopt a "laminated Christianity" that goes on top of all our other priorities and interests without disturbing or affecting us beneath the surface.

However, I find another possible solution to the Easter enigma I have struggled with. For as I carefully look back over almost a quarter-century of Christian commitment, I discover that my life too contains some powerful evidences of resurrection reality.

No, it hasn't often been spectacular and I often have failed to seize every spiritual opportunity. Nevertheless,

something real, something life-changing, something above and beyond my own power has been at work in me all these years. Gradually but dramatically the course of my life and character has been altered.

You yourself have said that it is in these "mortal bodies" that the same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead will give life. It was from the frustration and forced inactivity of prison that you wrote, "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on. . . ." And it is in your weaknesses and adversities that you seem most joyous and confident of God's power at work.

In this Easter/Pentecost season, I'm realizing something new. Though the blinding visions and eureka moments should and will occur in the genuine believer's life, the most relevant metaphor of the Holy Spirit isn't a rushing wind but a persistent breeze, not a mighty waterfall but a deep and steadily flowing stream.

Looking back over my life, I can see the winding but determined course that stream has taken. It may sound contradictory, but God's power in my life, in retrospect, has been both unobtrusive and overwhelming.

Christ IS risen, my dearest Paul. Ah, he is risen indeed.

Your unspectacular fellowservant,
Onesimus

Of wrens and wasps . . . and writing

Two weeks ago, Linda and I were in Iowa, helping to celebrate my parents' golden wedding anniversary. While there, I spent one day rummaging through the tiny shop building my dad built when I was just a boy. Among the cans of nails and piles of wood and metal, I found a birdhouse he had built years ago. Meticulously crafted from scrap lumber, it reminded me of Dad's flair for invention and ingenuity in recycling. I recalled the many sketches of futuristic automobiles carefully drawn on graph paper at the dining room table; the trestle and girder bridges and the two switches Dad made for the Lionel train I received one Christmas; the remote controlled cars painstakingly constructed out of sheet metal and electric motors. Surrounded by the birdhouse and other things he had built, I wondered aloud what my father might have accomplished had he been able to attend college, pursuing an engineering degree. (Another of those "what if" questions so easily posed, but impossible to answer.)

Later I mentioned the birdhouse to my mother. "The wrens never seemed to like that house," she said. "I don't know why. Maybe it was because one year wasps built a nest in it. We got rid of the wasps, but birds never used the house."

A birdhouse that birds never used. A total waste of energy? From a strict utilitarian standpoint, perhaps. But I know my father enjoyed the process of drawing the plans and carefully cutting and assembling the wood. Years later, the birdhouse reminded me of my father's talent in design and ability to create train bridges, switches—and birdhouses (some of which birds *did* use)—from scraps of wood and wire. The birdhouse provided an occasion for pleasure in its creation and joy now in reflection. For twenty five cents' worth of wood, that's good enough for me.

Still, I think that the next time I'm in Iowa, I'll clean out the birdhouse, replace the perch, and hang it so that Dad can see it from his room, where he now is bedfast. I want to see if there is a new generation of wrens in town "who knew not the wasps."

That birdhouse came to mind this morning as I thought of a writing project which may never be published. Should that be its fate, is the writing in vain? I don't think so. The author will

benefit from the discipline of putting thoughts into words and onto paper. Friends and family will benefit now and in years to come as they gain insight into what God was doing in the author's life. At least for me, creative processes such as writing have value in themselves. If the author's work is accepted for publication, so much the better. But many times, it is enough to share our thoughts on a more modest scale.

Recently we updated the computer software program for the *Visitor* subscription files. The old system basically was only a mailing list; the new system allows us to add information about your subscription (when you renewed last, when a change of address was entered, etc.). Phyllis Lentz, who maintains the *Visitor* mailing list, is discovering how nice it is to have subscription records at her fingertips rather than in file drawers in the back room.

In the process of transferring address information from the old database to the new one, we discovered a few obvious errors in some U.S. Zip codes and Canadian postal codes. Such errors cause problems as the computer sorts the mailing list, they give our mailing room staff major headaches, and probably delay the post office's delivery of your magazine.

We want to make our mailing list as accurate as possible. So, please take a moment right now to check the mailing label on the back cover, and note any correction—however slight—which needs to be made. Ideally, you should send us the actual mailing label (or a photocopy of it), with the correction neatly printed next to the label. However, if you don't wish to cut up your *Visitor* (that's totally understandable!) and you don't want to make a trip to the nearest copier, then please print *very clearly* both the address as it currently is (so we can locate the file) and then as it should be corrected.

By the way, this is an excellent time to check on the expiration date of your subscription. That information is on the upper right-hand corner of the mailing label, and shows the last issue (month and year) you are scheduled to receive. As you can imagine, we would be quite happy to receive your renewal check along with any correction of address.

G

Pontius Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius Puddle" from the *Visitor* must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526



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Responding to leadership

by Ken Letner

No one in leadership is above the scrutiny of his or her followers. Unfortunately, the scrutinizer has too often not only undermined leaders, but also attacked them to the point of rendering them impotent and ineffective. Rarely does the scrutinizer have this explicit motivation, but still the results are the same. Our subconscious can be a powerful destroyer. It is true that scrutiny or critical examination of a leader's vision and plans is necessary and right if the goals are accountability, spiritual undergirding, and personal enrichment. In fact, scrutiny is needed from followers if leaders are to be the persons of integrity which God desires (Romans 13:1; and Colossians 3:18-24). This is true for the home, the church, the school, and the government.

Unfortunately, what is "in" right now is to deride leadership. We don't conceal our subtle and not so subtle disrespect for our president's or prime minister's character—at least the media doesn't. We snicker at a politician's promises, thus dealing out an image problem even before she or he gets into office. We question a teacher's use of an assignment and implant disrespect in our children's minds.

Our culture and educational system trains us to not only question and critically examine, but to talk back, fight back, and get even. Thus, we breed and feed rebels who have difficulty responding positively to leadership or to those under whose authority they fall.

The objectives of the Children's Rights Movement as outlined in their "Child's Bill of Rights" certainly carries with it an attack on parental authority. Some of its objectives include:

- Children should have the right to make *all* their own decisions . . .
- Children of any age should have the right to live where they choose . . .
- Children should have access to any information that is available to adults . . .
- Children should be permitted to engage in any sexual activity that is legal for their parents . . .
- Children should never be spanked under any circumstances, whether at school or at home . . .
- Children of any age should be permitted to join a labor union, seek employment, receive equal pay for equal work, sign legal contracts, manage all of their own money, and be financially independent . . . (Dobson, *Straight Talk To Men and Their Wives*, Word, 1980, pp. 60-61).

As I think about this in relation to the church, I have many more questions than answers. Several of my questions have logical answers, but somehow at times the answers and resulting actions get obscured or set aside. I'd like to blame the culture for feeding my rebellious spirit, but I'm afraid my actions have more to do with my sinful nature and my humanity.

The questions:

- If this insidious attitude is present all about us, what scar is it creating in the church, both locally and denominationally?
- Are our pastors and denominational leaders established by God?
- Aren't these persons called of God to serve?
- Is the human element and ecclesiastical system for leadership selection directed by God, or is there too great a human element in our appointments?
- Has our teaching of the priesthood of all believers been taken to the extreme by giving us the attitude that the pastor's sermon or leader's direction is just another person's idea?

- Have we lost the mystery of receiving a word from the Lord through the pastor/leader?

- Do we only accept it as such if we happen to agree with his or her interpretation?

- Do we come to the sermon time expecting the pastor to have some "beef" with us and thus preach at us?

- Do we attend Regional Conference, General Conference, or even local church meetings with a suspicious attitude that leadership has a "hidden agenda"?

- What is the mind of Christ at such business times?

- Do we trust leadership?

- How has leadership proven itself in order to be appointed by the community of faith to such a position?

- Has leadership shown signs of moral culpability which would warrant diminished trust or distrust?

- Can we trust a pastor's/leader's word and expect their intent to be pure and in the best interest of the church?

- How can I be direct with my criticism rather than harboring grudges, attacking passively, or spreading rumors?

- How can I disagree, be content that I've been heard, and still submit to those in authority?

- How is it possible for leadership to win my confidence in their authority if I don't give my trust readily?

- Does leadership expect my unconditional obedience?

- How can a pastor/leader hear criticism and not feel personally attacked?

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In July Ken Letner will complete 9 years of service as executive director of the Board for Congregational Life.

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